THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF O. HENRY

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THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF O. HENRY

Edited, with an Introduction by
Bennett Cerf and
Van H. Cartmell

The more than 600 stories written by O. Henry provided an embarrassment of riches for the compilers of this volume. Within the scope of a book of 338 pages, they were guided in their choice by the most exacting present-day standards of admission. The final selection of the thirty-eight stories in this collection offers for the reader's delight those tales honored almost unanimously by anthologists and those which represent, in variety and balance, the best work of America's favorite story-teller. They are tales in his most mellow, humorous and ironic moods. They give the full range and flavor of the man, born William Sidney Porter, but known throughout the world as O. Henry, one of the great masters of the short story.

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THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF O. HENRY

Selected and with an Introduction by

BENNETT A. CERF

AND

VAN H. CARTMELL

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Introduction

IN THE LATE FALL of 1944 the editor of a great metropolitan newspaper wrote a book about New York. It was a very good book; the reviewers liked it. The highest praise they could give it was to say that here, at last, was another author who knew and loved New York as well as O. Henry. Forty years after the O. Henry stories about "Bagdad on the Subway" first began to delight the reading public they still remain the standard by which all other literature on the subject is judged. The "four million" have become the "eight million," the slang that high lights his dialogue has been superseded by other passing catch phrases, restaurants and hotels that served as his locale were razed a generation ago, but O. Henry remains secure in the hearts of the public as the prose laureate of Manhattan Island.

Among the hundreds of stories O. Henry left behind him are many laid in Central America, and New Orleans, and the rolling plains of Texas. This volume, seeking to present the cream of his writings, includes a goodly representation of them all. The majority of the tales that you will find here, however, center about New York. That is the way the author would have wanted it. His heart belonged to that narrow strip of land that lies between the East River and the Hudson.

O. Henry, it is surely unnecessary to say, is a pseudonym. His real name was William Sydney Porter. He was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1862, went to school there, and worked for five years in his uncle's drugstore. In 1882 he moved on to Texas, where he operated a short-lived hu-

morous weekly called the *Rolling Stone* and contributed a column to the Houston *Daily Post*. He also served as teller in an Austin bank, and that proved his temporary undoing. The bank was mismanaged. There was a shortage of funds. Porter was indicted.

Friendly biographers have hinted that Porter was innocent, but his own actions belie that theory. He fled to New Orleans, and then to Honduras, returning only when he heard that his wife was desperately ill. Sentenced to five years' imprisonment at the Ohio Federal Penitentiary, he actually served a little over three. It was during this dark period in his life that he developed into an author to be reckoned with. One of his cellmates gave him the plot for "A Retrieved Reformation" (reprinted in this volume), which Paul Armstrong later dramatized under the title of *Alias Jimmy Valentine*. It was a smash success—the forerunner of a whole school of "cops-and-robbers" dramaturgy—but Porter, unfortunately, got little of the proceeds. It was in the penitentiary too that he met the guard, Orrin Henry, from whom he borrowed a name.

In 1902 he first laid eyes on New York, and as "O. Henry" soon began to flood the magazines with his stories. Words—and plots—came easily to him—too easily perhaps. For eight years he maintained a prodigious output, goaded continuously by editors who had advanced him varying sums. He left over six hundred complete stories behind when he died of tuberculosis at forty-eight. "Pull up the shades so I can see New York," were his last words. "I don't want to go home in the dark."

O. Henry's first published book was *Cabbages and Kings*. It appeared in 1904, and consisted principally of tales of adventure and revolution in Latin America. The stories "Shoes" and "Ships" (really two parts of a single narrative) reprinted here are from that volume. His next book, two years later,

really established his literary fame. This was *The Four Million*. It contained not only some of the best of his New York tales, but introduced to the public a relatively new device—the surprise or "twist" ending. To this day writers are striving to surpass him in this type of story, only to prove anew the truth of that old adage of the prize ring: you can't beat a champion at his own game. No fewer than eleven of the thirty-eight stories in this volume come from *The Four Million*.

The Trimmed Lamp, published in 1907, and *The Voice of the City*, a year later, proved even more popular than *The Four Million*. There are nine stories from the former in this collection; four from the latter. There were two O. Henry books in 1909: *Options* and *Roads of Destiny*, and two more in 1910, the year he died: *Whirligigs* and *Strictly Business*. Three other collections of his stories appeared after his death, and then all of them were assembled in one bumper volume that has enjoyed an enormous sale to this very day.

The bulk of O. Henry's written work, truth to tell, does not measure up too well against the exacting standards of the present day. Many of his stories were glib and superficial rather than profound, obviously hurried and cut closely to a pattern that had proven serviceable. His characters, like his plots, tended to repeat themselves, and sustained him only because he was a master at contriving every possible variation of a familiar theme. This volume of selected stories is conclusive evidence, in the editors' opinion, that O. Henry at his best, however, deserves rank with America's greatest masters of the short story. Such tales as "A Municipal Report," "An Unfinished Story," "A Blackjack Bargainer," "A Lickpenny Lover," "The Gift of the Magi," "Mammon and the Archer," and "Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen" (by actual count the O. Henry stories most often reprinted in anthologies) are

gems of their kind; mellow, humorous, ironic, ingenious, and shot through with that eminently salable quality known as "human interest." It is no accident that five of his seven most famous stories are laid in the New York he loved so well.

BENNETT CERF and VAN CARTMELL

BEST STORIES OF O. HENRY

The Gift of the Magi

ONE DOLLAR AND EIGHTY-SEVEN CENTS. That was all. And sixty cents of it was in pennies. Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheeks burned with the silent imputation of parsimony that such close dealing implied. Three times Della counted it. One dollar and eighty-seven cents. And the next day would be Christmas.

There was clearly nothing to do but flop down on the shabby little couch and howl. So Della did it. Which instigates the moral reflection that life is made up of sobs, sniffles, and smiles, with sniffles predominating.

While the mistress of the home is gradually subsiding from the first stage to the second, take a look at the home. A furnished flat at $8 per week. It did not exactly beggar description, but it certainly had that word on the lookout for the mendicancy squad.

In the vestibule below was a letter-box into which no letter would go, and an electric button from which no mortal finger could coax a ring. Also appertaining thereunto was a card bearing the name "Mr. James Dillingham Young."

The "Dillingham" had been flung to the breeze during a former period of prosperity when its possessor was being paid $30 per week. Now, when the income was shrunk to $20, the letters of "Dillingham" looked blurred, as though they were thinking seriously of contracting to a modest and unassuming D. But whenever Mr. James Dillingham Young came home and reached his flat above he was called "Jim" and greatly

hugged by Mrs. James Dillingham Young, already introduced to you as Della. Which is all very good.

Della finished her cry and attended to her cheeks with the powder rag. She stood by the window and looked out dully at a gray cat walking a gray fence in a gray backyard. Tomorrow would be Christmas Day and she had only $1.87 with which to buy Jim a present. She had been saving every penny she could for months, with this result. Twenty dollars a week doesn't go far. Expenses had been greater than she had calculated. They always are. Only $1.87 to buy a present for Jim. Her Jim. Many a happy hour she had spent planning for something nice for him. Something fine and rare and sterling—something just a little bit near to being worthy of the honor of being owned by Jim.

There was a pier-glass between the windows of the room. Perhaps you have seen a pier-glass in an $8 flat. A very thin and very agile person may, by observing his reflection in a rapid sequence of longitudinal strips, obtain a fairly accurate conception of his looks. Della, being slender, had mastered the art.

Suddenly she whirled from the window and stood before the glass. Her eyes were shining brilliantly, but her face had lost its color within twenty seconds. Rapidly she pulled down her hair and let it fall to its full length.

Now, there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride. One was Jim's gold watch that had been his father's and his grandfather's. The other was Della's hair. Had the Queen of Sheba lived in the flat across the airshaft, Della would have let her hair hang out the window some day to dry just to depreciate Her Majesty's jewels and gifts. Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his beard from envy.

So now Della's beautiful hair fell about her rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters. It reached below her knee and made itself almost a garment for her. And then she did it up again nervously and quickly. Once she faltered for a minute and stood still while a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet.

On went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat. With a whirl of skirts and with the brilliant sparkle still in her eyes, she fluttered out the door and down the stairs to the street.

Where she stopped the sign read: "Mme. Sofronie. Hair Goods of All Kinds." One flight up Della ran, and collected herself, panting. Madame, large, too white, chilly, hardly looked the "Sofronie."

"Will you buy my hair?" asked Della.

"I buy hair," said Madame. "Take yer hat off and let's have a sight at the looks of it."

Down rippled the brown cascade.

"Twenty dollars," said Madame, lifting the mass with a practised hand.

"Give it to me quick," said Della.

Oh, and the next two hours tripped by on rosy wings. Forget the hashed metaphor. She was ransacking the stores for Jim's present.

She found it at last. It surely had been made for Jim and no one else. There was no other like it in any of the stores, and she had turned all of them inside out. It was a platinum fob chain simple and chaste in design, properly proclaiming its value by substance alone and not by meretricious ornamentation—as all good things should do. It was even worthy of The Watch. As soon as she saw it she knew that it must be Jim's. It was like him. Quietness and value—the description applied to both. Twenty-one dollars they took from her for it, and she hurried home with the 87 cents. With that chain

on his watch Jim might be properly anxious about the time in any company. Grand as the watch was, he sometimes looked at it on the sly on account of the old leather strap that he used in place of a chain.

When Della reached home her intoxication gave way a little to prudence and reason. She got out her curling irons and lighted the gas and went to work repairing the ravages made by generosity added to love. Which is always a tremendous task, dear friends—a mammoth task.

Within forty minutes her head was covered with tiny, closelying curls that made her look wonderfully like a truant schoolboy. She looked at her reflection in the mirror long, carefully, and critically.

"If Jim doesn't kill me," she said to herself, "before he takes a second look at me, he'll say I look like a Coney Island chorus girl. But what could I do—oh! what could I do with a dollar and eighty-seven cents?"

At 7 o'clock the coffee was made and the frying-pan was on the back of the stove hot and ready to cook the chops.

Jim was never late. Della doubled the fob chain in her hand and sat on the corner of the table near the door that he always entered. Then she heard his step on the stair away down on the first flight, and she turned white for just a moment. She had a habit of saying little silent prayers about the simplest everyday things, and now she whispered: "Please God, make him think I am still pretty."

The door opened and Jim stepped in and closed it. He looked thin and very serious. Poor fellow, he was only twenty-two—and to be burdened with a family! He needed a new overcoat and he was without gloves.

Jim stepped inside the door, as immovable as a setter at the scent of quail. His eyes were fixed upon Della, and there was an expression in them that she could not read, and it terrified her. It was not anger, nor surprise, nor disapproval,

nor horror, nor any of the sentiments that she had been prepared for. He simply stared at her fixedly with that peculiar expression on his face.

Della wriggled off the table and went for him.

"Jim, darling," she cried, "don't look at me that way. I had my hair cut off and sold it because I couldn't have lived through Christmas without giving you a present. It'll grow out again—you won't mind, will you? I just had to do it. My hair grows awfully fast. Say 'Merry Christmas!' Jim, and let's be happy. You don't know what a nice—what a beautiful, nice gift I've got for you."

"You've cut off your hair?" asked Jim, laboriously, as if he had not arrived at that patent fact yet even after the hardest mental labor.

"Cut it off and sold it," said Della. "Don't you like me just as well, anyhow? I'm me without my hair, ain't I?"

Jim looked about the room curiously.

"You say your hair is gone?" he said, with an air almost of idiocy.

"You needn't look for it," said Della. "It's sold, I tell you —sold and gone, too. It's Christmas Eve, boy. Be good to me, for it went for you. Maybe the hairs on my head were numbered," she went on with a sudden serious sweetness, "but nobody could ever count my love for you. Shall I put the chops on, Jim?"

Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della. For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction. Eight dollars a week or a million a year—what is the difference? A mathematician or a wit would give you the wrong answer. The magi brought valuable gifts, but that was not among them. This dark assertion will be illuminated later on.

Jim drew a package from his overcoat pocket and threw it upon the table.

"Don't make any mistake, Dell," he said, "about me. I don't think there's anything in the way of a haircut or a shave or a shampoo that could make me like my girl any less. But if you'll unwrap that package you may see why you had me going a while at first."

White fingers and nimble tore at the string and paper. And then an ecstatic scream of joy; and then, alas! a quick feminine change to hysterical tears and wails, necessitating the immediate employment of all the comforting powers of the lord of the flat.

For there lay The Combs—the set of combs, side and back, that Della had worshipped for long in a Broadway window. Beautiful combs, pure tortoise shell, with jewelled rims —just the shade to wear in the beautiful vanished hair. They were expensive combs, she knew, and her heart had simply craved and yearned over them without the least hope of possession. And now, they were hers, but the tresses that should have adorned the coveted adornments were gone.

But she hugged them to her bosom, and at length she was able to look up with dim eyes and a smile and say: "My hair grows so fast, Jim!"

And then Della leaped up like a little singed cat and cried, "Oh, oh!"

Jim had not yet seen his beautiful present. She held it out to him eagerly upon her open palm. The dull precious metal seemed to flash with a reflection of her bright and ardent spirit.

"Isn't it a dandy, Jim? I hunted all over town to find it. You'll have to look at the time a hundred times a day now. Give me your watch. I want to see how it looks on it."

Instead of obeying, Jim tumbled down on the couch and put his hands under the back of his head and smiled.

"Dell," said he, "let's put our Christmas presents away and keep 'em a while. They're too nice to use just at present. I

sold the watch to get the money to buy your combs. And now suppose you put the chops on."

The magi, as you know, were wise men—wonderfully wise men—who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication. And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house. But in a last word to the wise of these days let it be said that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are wisest. Everywhere they are wisest. They are the magi.

A Cosmopolite in a Café

At midnight the café was crowded. By some chance the little table at which I sat had escaped the eye of incomers, and two vacant chairs at it extended their arms with venal hospitality to the influx of patrons.

And then a cosmopolite sat in one of them, and I was glad, for I held a theory that since Adam no true citizen of the world has existed. We hear of them, and we see foreign labels on much luggage, but we find travellers instead of cosmopolites.

I invoke your consideration of the scene—the marble-topped tables, the range of leather-upholstered wall seats, the gay company, the ladies dressed in demi-state toilets, speaking in an exquisite visible chorus of taste, economy, opulence or art; the sedulous and largess-loving *garçons*, the music wisely

catering to all with its raids upon the composers; the *mélange* of talk and laughter—and, if you will, the Würzburger in the tall glass cones that bend to your lips as a ripe cherry sways on its branch to the beak of a robber jay. I was told by a sculptor from Mauch Chunk that the scene was truly Parisian.

My cosmopolite was named E. Rushmore Coglan, and he will be heard from next summer at Coney Island. He is to establish a new "attraction" there, he informed me, offering kingly diversion. And then his conversation ran along parallels of latitude and longitude. He took the great, round world in his hand, so to speak, familiarly, contemptuously, and it seemed no larger than the seed of a Maraschino cherry in a *table d'hôte* grapefruit. He spoke disrespectfully of the equator, he skipped from continent to continent, he derided the zones, he mopped up the high seas with his napkin. With a wave of his hand he would speak of a certain bazaar in Hyderabad. Whiff! He would have you on skis in Lapland. Zip! Now you rode the breakers with the Kanakas at Kealaikahiki. Presto! He dragged you through an Arkansas post-oak swamp, let you dry for a moment on the alkali plains of his Idaho ranch, then whirled you into the society of Viennese archdukes. Anon he would be telling you of a cold he acquired in a Chicago lake breeze and how old Escamila cured it in Buenos Ayres with a hot infusion of the *chuchula* weed. You would have addressed a letter to "E. Rushmore Coglan, Esq., the Earth, Solar System, the Universe," and mailed it, feeling confident that it would be delivered to him.

I was sure that I had found at last the one true cosmopolite since Adam, and I listened to his world-wide discourse fearful lest I should discover in it the local note of the mere globe-trotter. But his opinions never fluttered or drooped; he was as impartial to cities, countries, and continents as the winds or gravitation.

And as E. Rushmore Coglan prattled of this little planet I

thought with glee of a great almost-cosmopolite who wrote for the whole world and dedicated himself to Bombay. In a poem he has to say that there is pride and rivalry between the cities of the earth, and that "the men that breed from them, they traffic up and down, but cling to their cities' hem as a child to the mother's gown." And whenever they walk "by roaring streets unknown" they remember their native city "most faithful, foolish, fond; making her mere-breathed name their bond upon their bond." And my glee was roused because I had caught Mr. Kipling napping. Here I had found a man not made from dust; one who had no narrow boasts of birthplace or country, one who, if he bragged at all, would brag of his whole round globe against the Martians and the inhabitants of the Moon.

Expression on these subjects was precipitated from E. Rushmore Coglan by the third corner to our table. While Coglan was describing to me the topography along the Siberian Railway the orchestra glided into a medley. The concluding air was "Dixie," and as the exhilarating notes tumbled forth they were almost overpowered by a great clapping of hands from almost every table.

It is worth a paragraph to say that this remarkable scene can be witnessed every evening in numerous cafés in the City of New York. Tons of brew have been consumed over theories to account for it. Some have conjectured hastily that all Southerners in town hie themselves to cafés at nightfall. This applause of the "rebel" air in a Northern city does puzzle a little; but it is not insolvable. The war with Spain, many years' generous mint and watermelon crops, a few long-shot winners at the New Orleans race track, and the brilliant banquets given by the Indiana and Kansas citizens who compose the North Carolina Society have made the South rather a "fad" in Manhattan. Your manicure will lisp softly that your left forefinger reminds her so much of a gentleman's in Rich-

mond, Va. Oh, certainly; but many a lady has to work now —the war, you know.

When "Dixie" was being played a dark-haired young man sprang up from somewhere with a Mosby guerrilla yell and waved frantically his soft-brimmed hat. Then he strayed through the smoke, dropped into the vacant chair at our table and pulled out cigarettes.

The evening was at the period when reserve is thawed. One of us mentioned three Würzburgers to the waiter; the dark-haired young man acknowledged his inclusion in the order by a smile and a nod. I hastened to ask him a question because I wanted to try out a theory I had.

"Would you mind telling me," I began, "whether you are from——"

The fist of E. Rushmore Coglan banged the table and I was jarred into silence.

"Excuse me," said he, "but that's a question I never like to hear asked. What does it matter where a man is from? Is it fair to judge a man by his post-office address? Why, I've seen Kentuckians who hated whiskey, Virginians who weren't descended from Pocahontas, Indianians who hadn't written a novel, Mexicans who didn't wear velvet trousers with silver dollars sewed along the seams, funny Englishmen, spendthrift Yankees, cold-blooded Southerners, narrow-minded Westerners, and New Yorkers who were too busy to stop for an hour on the street to watch a one-armed grocer's clerk do up cranberries in paper bags. Let a man be a man and don't handicap him with the label of any section."

"Pardon me," I said, "but my curiosity was not altogether an idle one. I know the South, and when the band plays 'Dixie' I like to observe. I have formed the belief that the man who applauds that air with special violence and ostensible sectional loyalty is invariably a native of either Secaucus, N. J., or the district between Murray Hill Lyceum and the

Harlem River, this city. I was about to put my opinion to the test by inquiring of this gentleman when you interrupted with your own—larger theory, I must confess."

And now the dark-haired young man spoke to me, and it became evident that his mind also moved along its own set of grooves.

"I should like to be a periwinkle," said he, mysteriously, "on the top of a valley, and sing too-ralloo-ralloo."

This was clearly too obscure, so I turned again to Coglan.

"I've been around the world twelve times," said he. "I know an Esquimau in Upernavik who sends to Cincinnati for his neckties, and I saw a goat-herder in Uruguay who won a prize in a Battle Creek breakfast food puzzle competition. I pay rent on a room in Cairo, Egypt, and another in Yokohama all the year around. I've got slippers waiting for me in a tea-house in Shanghai, and I don't have to tell 'em how to cook my eggs in Rio Janeiro or Seattle. It's a mighty little old world. What's the use of bragging about being from the North, or the South, or the old manor house in the dale, or Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, or Pike's Peak, or Fairfax County, Va., or Hooligan's Flats or any place? It'll be a better world when we quit being fools about some mildewed town or ten acres of swampland just because we happened to be born there."

"You seem to be a genuine cosmopolite," I said, admiringly. "But it also seems that you would decry patriotism."

"A relic of the stone age," declared Coglan, warmly. "We are all brothers—Chinamen, Englishmen, Zulus, Patagonians and the people in the bend of the Kaw River. Some day all this petty pride in one's city or state or section or country will be wiped out, and we'll all be citizens of the world, as we ought to be."

"But while you are wandering in foreign lands," I per-

sisted, "do not your thoughts revert to some spot—some dear and——"

"Nary a spot," interrupted E. R. Coglan, flippantly. "The terrestrial, globular, planetary hunk of matter, slightly flattened at the poles, and known as the Earth, is my abode. I've met a good many object-bound citizens of this country abroad. I've seen men from Chicago sit in a gondola in Venice on a moonlight night and brag about their drainage canal. I've seen a Southerner on being introduced to the King of England hand that monarch, without batting his eyes, the information that his grand-aunt on his mother's side was related by marriage to the Perkinses, of Charleston. I knew a New Yorker who was kidnapped for ransom by some Afghanistan bandits. His people sent over the money and he came back to Kabul with the agent. 'Afghanistan?' the natives said to him through an interpreter. 'Well, not so slow, do you think?' 'Oh, I don't know,' says he, and he begins to tell them about a cab driver at Sixth Avenue and Broadway. Those ideas don't suit me. I'm not tied down to anything that isn't 8,000 miles in diameter. Just put me down as E. Rushmore Coglan, citizen of the terrestrial sphere."

My cosmopolite made a large adieu and left me, for he thought he saw some one through the chatter and smoke whom he knew. So I was left with the would-be periwinkle, who was reduced to Würzburger without further ability to voice his aspirations to perch, melodious, upon the summit of a valley.

I sat reflecting upon my evident cosmopolite and wondering how the poet had managed to miss him. He was my discovery and I believed in him. How was it? "The men that breed from them, they traffic up and down, but cling to their cities' hem as a child to the mother's gown."

Not so E. Rushmore Coglan. With the whole world for his——

My meditations were interrupted by a tremendous noise and conflict in another part of the café. I saw above the heads of the seated patrons E. Rushmore Coglan and a stranger to me engaged in terrific battle. They fought between the tables like Titans, and glasses crashed, and men caught their hats up and were knocked down, and a brunette screamed, and a blonde began to sing "Teasing."

My cosmopolite was sustaining the pride and reputation of the Earth when the waiters closed in on both combatants with their famous flying wedge formation and bore them outside, still resisting.

I called McCarthy, one of the French *garçons*, and asked him the cause of the conflict.

"The man with the red tie" (that was my cosmopolite), said he, "got hot on account of things said about the bum sidewalks and water supply of the place he come from by the other guy."

"Why," said I, bewildered, "that man is a citizen of the world—a cosmopolite. He——"

"Originally from Mattawamkeag, Maine, he said," continued McCarthy, "and he wouldn't stand for no knockin' the place."

Man About Town

THERE were two or three things that I wanted to know. I do not care about a mystery. So I began to inquire.

It took me two weeks to find out what women carry in dress suit cases. And then I began to ask why a mattress is made in two pieces. This serious query was at first received with suspicion because it sounded like a conundrum. I was

at last assured that its double form of construction was designed to make lighter the burden of woman, who makes up beds. I was so foolish as to persist, begging to know why, then, they were not made in two equal pieces; whereupon I was shunned.

The third draught that I craved from the fount of knowledge was enlightenment concerning the character known as A Man About Town. He was more vague in my mind than a type should be. We must have a concrete idea of anything, even if it be an imaginary idea, before we can comprehend it. Now, I have a mental picture of John Doe that is as clear as a steel engraving. His eyes are weak blue; he wears a brown vest and a shiny black serge coat. He stands always in the sunshine chewing something; and he keeps half-shutting his pocket knife and opening it again with his thumb. And, if the Man Higher Up is ever found, take my assurance for it, he will be a large, pale man with blue wristlets showing under his cuffs, and he will be sitting to have his shoes polished within sound of a bowling alley, and there will be somewhere about him turquoises.

But the canvas of my imagination, when it came to limning the Man About Town, was blank. I fancied that he had a detachable sneer (like the smile of the Cheshire cat) and attached cuffs; and that was all. Whereupon I asked a newspaper reporter about him.

"Why," said he, "a 'Man About Town' is something between a 'rounder' and a 'clubman.' He isn't exactly—well, he fits in between Mrs. Fish's receptions and private boxing bouts. He doesn't—well, he doesn't belong either to the Lotos Club or to the Jerry McGeogheghan Galvanized Iron Workers' Apprentices' Left Hook Chowder Association. I don't exactly know how to describe him to you. You'll see him everywhere there's anything doing. Yes, I suppose he's a type. Dress clothes every evening; knows the ropes; calls every

policeman and waiter in town by their first names. No; he never travels with the hydrogen derivatives. You generally see him alone or with another man."

My friend the reporter left me, and I wandered further afield. By this time the 3126 electric lights on the Rialto were alight. People passed, but they held me not. Paphian eyes stayed upon me, and left me unscathed. Diners, heimgangers, chop-girls, confidence men, panhandlers, actors, highwaymen, millionaires, and outlanders hurried, skipped, strolled, sneaked, swaggered, and scurried by me; but I took no note of them. I knew them all; I had read their hearts; they had served. I wanted my Man About Town. He was a type, and to drop him would be an error—a typograph—but no! let us continue.

Let us continue with a moral digression. To see a family reading the Sunday paper gratifies. The sections have been separated. Papa is earnestly scanning the page that pictures the young lady exercising before an open window, and bending—but there, there! Mamma is interested in trying to guess the missing letters in the word N—w Yo—k. The oldest girls are eagerly perusing the financial reports, for a certain young man remarked last Sunday night that he had taken a flyer in Q., X. & Z. Willie, the eighteen-year-old son, who attends the New York public school, is absorbed in the weekly article describing how to make over an old shirt, for he hopes to take a prize in sewing on graduation day.

Grandma is holding to the comic supplement with a two-hours' grip; and little Tottie, the baby, is rocking along the best she can with the real estate transfers. This view is intended to be reassuring, for it is desirable that a few lines of this story be skipped. For it introduces strong drink.

I went into a café to—and while it was being mixed I asked the man who grabs up your hot Scotch spoon as soon as you lay it down what he understood by the term, epithet, descrip-

tion, designation, characterization or appellation, viz.: a "Man About Town."

"Why," said he, carefully, "it means a fly guy that's wise to the all-night push—see? It's a hot sport that you can't bump to the rail anywhere between the Flatirons—see? I guess that's about what it means."

I thanked him and departed.

On the sidewalk a Salvation lassie shook her contribution receptacle gently against my waistcoat pocket.

"Would you mind telling me," I asked her, "if you ever meet with the character commonly denominated as 'A Man About Town' during your daily wanderings?"

"I think I know whom you mean," she answered, with a gentle smile. "We see them in the same places night after night. They are the devil's body guard, and if the soldiers of any army are as faithful as they are, their commanders are well served. We go among them, diverting a few pennies from their wickedness to the Lord's service."

She shook the box again and I dropped a dime into it.

In front of a glittering hotel a friend of mine, a critic, was climbing from a cab. He seemed at leisure; and I put my question to him. He answered me conscientiously, as I was sure he would.

"There is a type of 'Man About Town' in New York," he answered. "The term is quite familiar to me, but I don't think I was ever called upon to define the character before. It would be difficult to point you out an exact specimen. I would say, offhand, that it is a man who had a hopeless case of the peculiar New York disease of wanting to see and know. At 6 o'clock each day life begins with him. He follows rigidly the conventions of dress and manners; but in the business of poking his nose into places where he does not belong he could give pointers to a civet cat or a jackdaw. He is the man who has chased Bohemia about the town from rathskeller to roof

garden and from Hester Street to Harlem until you can't find a place in the city where they don't cut their spaghetti with a knife. Your 'Man About Town' has done that. He is always on the scent of something new. He is curiosity, impudence, and omnipresence. Hansoms were made for him, and gold-banded cigars; and the curse of music at dinner. There are not so many of him; but his minority report is adopted everywhere.

"I'm glad you brought up the subject; I've felt the influence of this nocturnal blight upon our city, but I never thought to analyze it before. I can see now that your 'Man About Town' should have been classified long ago. In his wake spring up wine agents and cloak models; and the orchestra plays 'Let's All Go Up to Maud's' for him, by request, instead of Händel. He makes his rounds every evening; while you and I see the elephant once a week. When the cigar store is raided, he winks at the officer, familiar with his ground, and walks away immune, while you and I search among the Presidents for names, and among the stars for addresses to give the desk sergeant."

My friend, the critic, paused to acquire breath for fresh eloquence. I seized my advantage.

"You have classified him," I cried with joy. "You have painted his portrait in the gallery of city types. But I must meet one face to face. I must study the Man About Town at first hand. Where shall I find him? How shall I know him?"

Without seeming to hear me, the critic went on. And his cab-driver was waiting for his fare, too.

"He is the sublimated essence of Butt-in; the refined, intrinsic extract of Rubber; the concentrated, purified, irrefutable, unavoidable spirit of Curiosity and Inquisitiveness. A new sensation is the breath in his nostrils; when his experience is exhausted he explores new fields with the indefatigability of a——"

"Excuse me," I interrupted, "but can you produce one of this type? It is a new thing to me. I must study it. I will search the town over until I find one. Its habitat must be here on Broadway."

"I am about to dine here," said my friend. "Come inside, and if there is a Man About Town present I will point him out to you. I know most of the regular patrons here."

"I am not dining yet," I said to him. "You will excuse me. I am going to find my Man About Town this night if I have to rake New York from the Battery to Little Coney Island."

I left the hotel and walked down Broadway. The pursuit of my type gave a pleasant savor of life and interest to the air I breathed. I was glad to be in a city so great, so complex and diversified. Leisurely and with something of an air I strolled along with my heart expanding at the thought that I was a citizen of great Gotham, a sharer in its magnificence and pleasures, a partaker in its glory and prestige.

I turned to cross the street. I heard something buzz like a bee, and then I took a long, pleasant ride with Santos-Dumont.

When I opened my eyes I remembered a smell of gasoline, and I said aloud: "Hasn't it passed yet?"

A hospital nurse laid a hand that was not particularly soft upon my brow that was not at all fevered. A young doctor came along, grinned, and handed me a morning newspaper.

"Want to see how it happened?" he asked, cheerily. I read the article. Its headlines began where I heard the buzzing leave off the night before. It closed with these lines:

"——Bellevue Hospital, where it was said that his injuries were not serious. He appeared to be a typical Man About Town."

The Cop and the Anthem

On his bench in Madison Square Soapy moved uneasily. When wild geese honk high of nights, and when women without sealskin coats grow kind to their husbands, and when Soapy moves uneasily on his bench in the park, you may know that winter is near at hand.

A dead leaf fell in Soapy's lap. That was Jack Frost's card. Jack is kind to the regular denizens of Madison Square, and gives fair warning of his annual call. At the corners of four streets he hands his pasteboard to the North Wind, footman of the mansion of All Outdoors, so that the inhabitants thereof may make ready.

Soapy's mind became cognizant of the fact that the time had come for him to resolve himself into a singular Committee of Ways and Means to provide against the coming rigor. And therefore he moved uneasily on his bench.

The hibernatorial ambitions of Soapy were not of the highest. In them were no considerations of Mediterranean cruises, of soporific Southern skies or drifting in the Vesuvian Bay. Three months on the Island was what his soul craved. Three months of assured board and bed and congenial company, safe from Boreas and bluecoats, seemed to Soapy the essence of things desirable.

For years the hospitable Blackwell's had been his winter quarters. Just as his more fortunate fellow New Yorkers had bought their tickets to Palm Beach and the Riviera each winter, so Soapy had made his humble arrangements for his annual hegira to the Island. And now the time was come. On the previous night three Sabbath newspapers, distributed beneath his coat, about his ankles and over his lap, had failed

to repulse the cold as he slept on his bench near the spurting fountain in the ancient square. So the Island loomed big and timely in Soapy's mind. He scorned the provisions made in the name of charity for the city's dependents. In Soapy's opinion the Law was more benign than Philanthropy. There was an endless round of institutions, municipal and eleemosynary on which he might set out and receive lodging and food accordant with the simple life. But to one of Soapy's proud spirit the gifts of charity are encumbered. If not in coin you must pay in humiliation of spirit for every benefit received at the hands of philanthropy. As Cæsar had his Brutus, every bed of charity must have its toll of a bath, every loaf of bread its compensation of a private and personal inquisition. Wherefore it is better to be a guest of the law, which, though conducted by rules, does not meddle unduly with a gentleman's private affairs.

Soapy, having decided to go to the Island, at once set about accomplishing his desire. There were many easy ways of doing this. The pleasantest was to dine luxuriously at some expensive restaurant; and then, after declaring insolvency, be handed over quietly and without uproar to a policeman. An accommodating magistrate would do the rest.

Soapy left his bench and strolled out of the square and across the level sea of asphalt, where Broadway and Fifth Avenue flow together. Up Broadway he turned, and halted at a glittering café, where are gathered together nightly the choicest products of the grape, the silkworm, and the protoplasm.

Soapy had confidence in himself from the lowest button of his vest upward. He was shaven, and his coat was decent and his neat black, ready-tied four-in-hand had been presented to him by a lady missionary on Thanksgiving Day. If he could reach a table in the restaurant unsuspected success would be his. The portion of him that would show above the

able would raise no doubt in the waiter's mind. A roasted mallard duck, thought Soapy, would be about the thing—with a bottle of Chablis, and then Camembert, a demi-tasse and a cigar. One dollar for the cigar would be enough. The total would not be so high as to call forth any supreme manifestation of revenge from the café management; and yet the meat would leave him filled and happy for the journey to his winter refuge.

But as Soapy set foot inside the restaurant door the head waiter's eye fell upon his frayed trousers and decadent shoes. Strong and ready hands turned him about and conveyed him in silence and haste to the sidewalk and averted the ignoble fate of the menaced mallard.

Soapy turned off Broadway. It seemed that his route to the coveted Island was not to be an epicurean one. Some other way of entering limbo must be thought of.

At a corner of Sixth Avenue electric lights and cunningly displayed wares behind plate-glass made a shop window conspicuous. Soapy took a cobblestone and dashed it through the glass. People came running around the corner, a policeman in the lead. Soapy stood still, with his hands in his pockets, and smiled at the sight of brass buttons.

"Where's the man that done that?" inquired the officer, excitedly.

"Don't you figure out that I might have had something to do with it?" said Soapy, not without sarcasm, but friendly, as one greets good fortune.

The policeman's mind refused to accept Soapy even as a clue. Men who smash windows do not remain to parley with the law's minions. They take to their heels. The policeman saw a man halfway down the block running to catch a car. With drawn club he joined in the pursuit. Soapy, with disgust in his heart, loafed along, twice unsuccessful.

On the opposite side of the street was a restaurant of no

great pretensions. It catered to large appetites and modest purses. Its crockery and atmosphere were thick; its soup and napery thin. Into this place Soapy took his accusive shoes and telltale trousers without challenge. At a table he sat and consumed beefsteak, flapjacks, doughnuts and pie. And then to the waiter he betrayed the fact that the minutest coin and himself were strangers.

"Now, get busy and call a cop," said Soapy. "And don't keep a gentleman waiting."

"No cop for youse," said the waiter, with a voice like butter cakes and an eye like the cherry in a Manhattan cocktail. "Hey, Con!"

Neatly upon his left ear on the callous pavement two waiters pitched Soapy. He arose joint by joint, as a carpenter's rule opens, and beat the dust from his clothes. Arrest seemed but a rosy dream. The Island seemed very far away. A policeman who stood before a drug store two doors away laughed and walked down the street.

Five blocks Soapy travelled before his courage permitted him to woo capture again. This time the opportunity presented what he fatuously termed to himself a "cinch." A young woman of a modest and pleasing guise was standing before a show window gazing with sprightly interest at its display of shaving mugs and inkstands, and two yards from the window a large policeman of severe demeanor leaned against a water plug.

It was Soapy's design to assume the rôle of the despicable and execrated "masher." The refined and elegant appearance of his victim and the contiguity of the conscientious cop encouraged him to believe that he would soon feel the pleasant official clutch upon his arm that would insure his winter quarters on the right little, tight little isle.

Soapy straightened the lady missionary's ready-made tie, dragged his shrinking cuffs into the open, set his hat at a kill-

ing cant and sidled toward the young woman. He made eyes at her, was taken with sudden coughs and "hems," smiled, smirked and went brazenly through the impudent and contemptible litany of the "masher." With half an eye Soapy saw that the policeman was watching him fixedly. The young woman moved away a few steps, and again bestowed her absorbed attention upon the shaving mugs. Soapy followed, boldly stepping to her side, raised his hat and said:

"Ah there, Bedelia! Don't you want to come and play in my yard?"

The policeman was still looking. The persecuted young woman had but to beckon a finger and Soapy would be practically en route for his insular haven. Already he imagined he could feel the cozy warmth of the station-house. The young woman faced him and, stretching out a hand, caught Soapy's coat sleeve.

"Sure, Mike," she said, joyfully, "if you'll blow me to a pail of suds. I'd have spoke to you sooner, but the cop was watching."

With the young woman playing the clinging ivy to his oak Soapy walked past the policeman overcome with gloom. He seemed doomed to liberty.

At the next corner he shook off his companion and ran. He halted in the district where by night are found the lightest streets, hearts, vows and librettos. Women in furs and men in greatcoats moved gaily in the wintry air. A sudden fear seized Soapy that some dreadful enchantment had rendered him immune to arrest. The thought brought a little of panic upon it, and when he came upon another policeman lounging grandly in front of a transplendent theatre he caught at the immediate straw of "disorderly conduct."

On the sidewalk Soapy began to yell drunken gibberish at the top of his harsh voice. He danced, howled, raved, and otherwise disturbed the welkin.

The policeman twirled his club, turned his back to Soapy and remarked to a citizen:

"'Tis one of them Yale lads celebratin' the goose egg they give to the Hartford College. Noisy; but no harm. We've instructions to lave them be."

Disconsolate, Soapy ceased his unavailing racket. Would never a policeman lay hands on him? In his fancy the Island seemed an unattainable Arcadia. He buttoned his thin coat against the chilling wind.

In a cigar store he saw a well-dressed man lighting a cigar at a swinging light. His silk umbrella he had set by the door on entering. Soapy stepped inside, secured the umbrella and sauntered off with it slowly. The man at the cigar light followed hastily.

"My umbrella," he said, sternly.

"Oh, is it?" sneered Soapy, adding insult to petit larceny. "Well, why don't you call a policeman? I took it. Your umbrella! Why don't you call a cop? There stands one on the corner."

The umbrella owner slowed his steps. Soapy did likewise, with a presentiment that luck would again run against him. The policeman looked at the two curiously.

"Of course," said the umbrella man—"that is—well, you know how these mistakes occur—I—if it's your umbrella I hope you'll excuse me—I picked it up this morning in a restaurant—If you recognize it as yours, why—I hope you'll——"

"Of course it's mine," said Soapy, viciously.

The ex-umbrella man retreated. The policeman hurried to assist a tall blonde in an opera cloak across the street in front of a street car that was approaching two blocks away.

Soapy walked eastward through a street damaged by improvements. He hurled the umbrella wrathfully into an excavation. He muttered against the men who wear helmets and

carry clubs. Because he wanted to fall into their clutches, they seemed to regard him as a king who could do no wrong.

At length Soapy reached one of the avenues to the east where the glitter and turmoil was but faint. He set his face down this toward Madison Square, for the homing instinct survives even when the home is a park bench.

But on an unusually quiet corner Soapy came to a standstill. Here was an old church, quaint and rambling and gabled. Through one violet-stained window a soft light glowed, where, no doubt, the organist loitered over the keys, making sure of his mastery of the coming Sabbath anthem. For there drifted out to Soapy's ears sweet music that caught and held him transfixed against the convolutions of the iron fence.

The moon was above, lustrous and serene; vehicles and pedestrians were few; sparrows twittered sleepily in the eaves—for a little while the scene might have been a country churchyard. And the anthem that the organist played cemented Soapy to the iron fence, for he had known it well in the days when his life contained such things as mothers and roses and ambitions and friends and immaculate thoughts and collars.

The conjunction of Soapy's receptive state of mind and the influences about the old church wrought a sudden and wonderful change in his soul. He viewed with swift horror the pit into which he had tumbled, the degraded days, unworthy desires, dead hopes, wrecked faculties and base motives that made up his existence.

And also in a moment his heart responded thrillingly to this novel mood. An instantaneous and strong impulse moved him to battle with his desperate fate. He would pull himself out of the mire; he would make a man of himself again; he would conquer the evil that had taken possession of him. There was time; he was comparatively young yet: he would resurrect his old eager ambitions and pursue them without faltering. Those solemn but sweet organ notes had set up a

revolution in him. To-morrow he would go into the roaring downtown district and find work. A fur importer had once offered him a place as driver. He would find him to-morrow and ask for the position. He would be somebody in the world. He would——

Soapy felt a hand laid on his arm. He looked quickly around into the broad face of a policeman.

"What are you doin' here?" asked the officer.

"Nothin'," said Soapy.

"Then come along," said the policeman.

"Three months on the Island," said the Magistrate in the Police Court the next morning.

The Love-Philtre of Ikey Schoenstein

THE BLUE LIGHT DRUG STORE is downtown, between the Bowery and First Avenue, where the distance between the two streets is the shortest. The Blue Light does not consider that pharmacy is a thing of bric-à-brac, scent and ice-cream soda. If you ask it for pain-killer it will not give you a bonbon.

The Blue Light scorns the labor-saving arts of modern pharmacy. It macerates its opium and percolates its own laudanum and paregoric. To this day pills are made behind its tall prescription desk—pills rolled out on its own pill-tile, divided with a spatula, rolled with the finger and thumb, dusted with calcined magnesia and delivered in little round pasteboard pill-boxes. The store is on a corner about which coveys of ragged-plumed, hilarious children play and become candidates for the cough drops and soothing syrups that wait for them inside.

Ikey Schoenstein was the night clerk of the Blue Light and

the friend of his customers. Thus it is on the East Side, where the heart of pharmacy is not glacé. There, as it should be, the druggist is a counsellor, a confessor, an adviser, an able and willing missionary and mentor whose learning is respected, whose occult wisdom is venerated and whose medicine is often poured, untasted, into the gutter. Therefore Ikey's corniform, be-spectacled nose and narrow, knowledge-bowed figure was well known in the vicinity of the Blue Light, and his advice and notice were much desired.

Ikey roomed and breakfasted at Mrs. Riddle's two squares away. Mrs. Riddle had a daughter named Rosy. The circumlocution has been in vain—you must have guessed it—Ikey adored Rosy. She tinctured all his thoughts; she was the compound extract of all that was chemically pure and officinal—the dispensatory contained nothing equal to her. But Ikey was timid, and his hopes remained insoluble in the menstruum of his backwardness and fears. Behind his counter he was a superior being, calmly conscious of special knowledge and worth; outside he was a weak-kneed, purblind, motorman-cursed rambler, with ill-fitting clothes stained with chemicals and smelling of socotrine aloes and valerianate of ammonia.

The fly in Ikey's ointment (thrice welcome, pat trope!) was Chunk McGowan.

Mr. McGowan was also striving to catch the bright smiles tossed about by Rosy. But he was no out-fielder as Ikey was; he picked them off the bat. At the same time he was Ikey's friend and customer, and often dropped in at the Blue Light Drug Store to have a bruise painted with iodine or get a cut rubber-plastered after a pleasant evening spent along the Bowery.

One afternoon McGowan drifted in in his silent, easy way, and sat, comely, smooth-faced, hard, indomitable, good-natured, upon a stool.

"Ikey," said he, when his friend had fetched his mortar and

sat opposite, grinding gum benzoin to a powder, "get busy with your ear. It's drugs for me if you've got the line I need."

Ikey scanned the countenance of Mr. McGowan for the usual evidence of conflict, but found none.

"Take your coat off," he ordered. "I guess already that you have been stuck in the ribs with a knife. I have many times told you those Dagoes would do you up."

Mr. McGowan smiled. "Not them," he said. "Not any Dagoes. But you've located the diagnosis all right enough—it's under my coat, near the ribs. Say! Ikey—Rosy and me are goin' to run away and get married to-night."

Ikey's left forefinger was doubled over the edge of the mortar, holding it steady. He gave it a wild rap with the pestle, but felt it not. Meanwhile Mr. McGowan's smile faded to a look of perplexed gloom.

"That is," he continued, "if she keeps in the notion until the times comes. We've been layin' pipes for the getaway for two weeks. One day she says she will; the same evenin' she says nixy. We've agreed on to-night, and Rosy's stuck to the affirmative this time for two whole days. But it's five hours yet till the time, and I'm afraid she'll stand me up when it comes to the scratch."

"You said you wanted drugs," remarked Ikey.

Mr. McGowan looked ill at ease and harassed—a condition opposed to his usual line of demeanor. He made a patent-medicine almanac into a roll and fitted it with unprofitable carefulness about his finger.

"I wouldn't have this double handicap make a false start to-night for a million," he said. "I've got a little flat up in Harlem all ready, with chrysanthemums on the table and a kettle ready to boil. And I've engaged a pulpit pounder to be ready at his house for us at 9.30. It's got to come off. And if Rosy don't change her mind again!"—Mr. McGowan ceased, a prey to his doubts.

"I don't see them yet," said Ikey, shortly, "what makes it that you talk of drugs, or what I can be doing about it."

"Old man Riddle don't like me a little bit," went on the uneasy suitor, bent upon marshalling his arguments. "For a week he hasn't let Rosy step outside the door with me. If it wasn't for losin' a boarder they'd have bounced me long ago. I'm makin' $20 a week and she'll never regret flyin' the coop with Chunk McGowan."

"You will excuse me, Chunk," said Ikey. "I must make a prescription that is to be called for soon."

"Say," said McGowan, looking up suddenly, "say, Ikey, ain't there a drug of some kind—some kind of powders that'll make a girl like you better if you give 'em to her?"

Ikey's lip beneath his nose curled with the scorn of superior enlightenment; but before he could answer, McGowan continued:

"Tim Lacy told me he got some once from a croaker uptown and fed 'em to his girl in soda water. From the very first dose he was ace-high and everybody else looked like thirty cents to her. They was married in less than two weeks."

Strong and simple was Chunk McGowan. A better reader of men than Ikey was could have seen that his tough frame was strung upon fine wires. Like a good general who was about to invade the enemy's territory he was seeking to guard every point against possible failure.

"I thought," went on Chunk, hopefully, "that if I had one of them powders to give Rosy when I see her at supper tonight it might brace her up and keep her from reneging on the proposition to skip. I guess she don't need a mule team to drag her away, but women are better at coaching than they are at running bases. If the stuff'll work just for a couple of hours it'll do the trick."

"When is this foolishness of running away to be happening?" asked Ikey.

"Nine o'clock," said Mr. McGowan. "Supper's at seven. At eight Rosy goes to bed with a headache, at nine old Parvenzano lets me through to his backyard, where there's a board off Riddle's fence, next door. I go under her window and help her down the fire-escape. We've got to make it early on the preacher's account. It's all dead easy if Rosy don't balk when the flag drops. Can you fix me one of them powders, Ikey?"

Ikey Schoenstein rubbed his nose slowly.

"Chunk," said he, "it is of drugs of that nature that pharmaceutists must have much carefulness. To you alone of my acquaintance would I intrust a powder like that. But for you I shall make it, and you shall see how it makes Rosy to think of you."

Ikey went behind the prescription desk. There he crushed to a powder two soluble tablets, each containing a quarter of a grain of morphia. To them he added a little sugar of milk to increase the bulk, and folded the mixture neatly in a white paper. Taken by an adult this powder would insure several hours of heavy slumber without danger to the sleeper. This he handed to Chunk McGowan, telling him to administer it in a liquid if possible, and received the hearty thanks of the backyard Lochinvar.

The subtlety of Ikey's action becomes apparent upon recital of his subsequent move. He sent a messenger for Mr. Riddle and disclosed the plans of Mr. McGowan for eloping with Rosy. Mr. Riddle was a stout man, brick-dusty of complexion and sudden in action.

"Much obliged," he said, briefly, to Ikey. "The lazy Irish loafer! My own room's just above Rosy's. I'll just go up there myself after supper and load the shot-gun and wait. If he comes in my backyard he'll go away in a ambulance instead of a bridal chaise."

With Rosy held in the clutches of Morpheus for a many-

hours deep slumber, and the blood-thirsty parent waiting, armed and forewarned, Ikey felt that his rival was close, indeed, upon discomfiture.

All night in the Blue Light Drug Store he waited at his duties for chance news of the tragedy, but none came.

At eight o'clock in the morning the day clerk arrived and Ikey started hurriedly for Mrs. Riddle's to learn the outcome. And, lo! as he stepped out of the store who but Chunk McGowan sprang from a passing street car and grasped his hand —Chunk McGowan with a victor's smile and flushed with joy.

"Pulled it off," said Chunk with Elysium in his grin. "Rosy hit the fire-escape on time to a second, and we was under the wire at the Reverend's at 9.30¼. She's up at the flat—she cooked eggs this mornin' in a blue kimono—Lord! how lucky I am! You must pace up some day, Ikey, and feed with us. I've got a job down near the bridge, and that's where I'm heading for now."

"The—the—powder?" stammered Ikey.

"Oh, that stuff you gave me!" said Chunk, broadening his grin; "well, it was this way. I sat down at the supper table last night at Riddle's, and I looked at Rosy, and I says to myself, 'Chunk, if you get the girl get her on the square—don't try any hocus-pocus with a thoroughbred like her.' And I keeps the paper you give me in my pocket. And then my lamps fall on another party present, who, I says to myself, is failin' in a proper affection toward his comin' son-in-law, so I watches my chance and dumps that powder in old man Riddle's coffee—see?"

Mammon and the Archer

Old anthony rockwall, retired manufacturer and proprietor of Rockwall's Eureka Soap, looked out the library window of his Fifth Avenue mansion and grinned. His neighbor to the right—the aristocratic clubman, G. Van Schuylight Suffolk-Jones—came out to his waiting motorcar, wrinkling a contumelious nostril, as usual, at the Italian renaissance sculpture of the soap palace's front elevation.

"Stuck-up old statuette of nothing doing!" commented the ex-Soap King. "The Eden Musée'll get that old frozen Nesselrode yet if he don't watch out. I'll have this house painted red, white, and blue next summer and see if that'll make his Dutch nose turn up any higher."

And then Anthony Rockwall, who never cared for bells went to the door of his library and shouted "Mike!" in the same voice that had once chipped off pieces of the welkin on the Kansas prairies.

"Tell my son," said Anthony to the answering menial, "to come in here before he leaves the house."

When young Rockwall entered the library the old man laid aside his newspaper, looked at him with a kindly grimness on his big, smooth, ruddy countenance, rumpled his mop of white hair with one hand and rattled the keys in his pocket with the other.

"Richard," said Anthony Rockwall, "what do you pay for the soap that you use?"

Richard, only six months home from college, was startled a little. He had not yet taken the measure of this sire of his, who was as full of unexpectedness as a girl at her first party.

"Six dollars a dozen, I think, dad."

"And your clothes?"

"I suppose about sixty dollars, as a rule."

"You're a gentleman," said Anthony, decidedly. "I've heard of these young bloods spending $24 a dozen for soap, and going over the hundred mark for clothes. You've got as much money to waste as any of 'em, and yet you stick to what's decent and moderate. Now I use the old Eureka—not only for sentiment, but it's the purest soap made. Whenever you pay more than 10 cents a cake for soap you buy bad perfumes and labels. But 50 cents is doing very well for a young man in your generation, position and condition. As I said, you're a gentleman. They say it takes three generations to make one. They're off. Money'll do it as slick as soap grease. It's made you one. By hokey! it's almost made one of me. I'm nearly as impolite and disagreeable and ill-mannered as these two old knickerbocker gents on each side of me that can't sleep of nights because I bought in between 'em."

"There are some things that money can't accomplish," remarked young Rockwall, rather gloomily.

"Now, don't say that," said old Anthony, shocked. "I bet my money on money every time. I've been through the encyclopædia down to Y looking for something you can't buy with it; and I expect to have to take up the appendix next week. I'm for money against the field. Tell me something money won't buy."

"For one thing," answered Richard, rankling a little, "it won't buy one into the exclusive circles of society."

"Oho! won't it?" thundered the champion of the root of evil. "You tell me where your exclusive circles would be if the first Astor hadn't had the money to pay for his steerage passage over?"

Richard sighed.

"And that's what I was coming to," said the old man, less boisterously. "That's why I asked you to come in. There's

something going wrong with you, boy. I've been noticing it for two weeks. Out with it. I guess I could lay my hands on eleven millions within twenty-four hours, besides the real estate. If it's your liver, there's the *Rambler* down in the bay, coaled, and ready to steam down to the Bahamas in two days."

"Not a bad guess, dad; you haven't missed it far."

"Ah," said Anthony, keenly; "what's her name?"

Richard began to walk up and down the library floor. There was enough comradeship and sympathy in this crude old father of his to draw his confidence.

"Why don't you ask her?" demanded old Anthony. "She'll jump at you. You've got the money and the looks, and you're a decent boy. Your hands are clean. You've got no Eureka soap on 'em. You've been to college, but she'll overlook that."

"I haven't had a chance," said Richard.

"Make one," said Anthony. "Take her for a walk in the park, or a straw ride, or walk home with her from church. Chance! Pshaw!"

"You don't know the social mill, dad. She's part of the stream that turns it. Every hour and minute of her time is arranged for days in advance. I must have that girl, dad, or this town is a blackjack swamp forevermore. And I can't write it—I can't do that."

"Tut!" said the old man. "Do you mean to tell me that with all the money I've got you can't get an hour or two of a girl's time for yourself?"

"I've put it off too late. She's going to sail for Europe at noon day after to-morrow for a two years' stay. I'm to see her alone to-morrow evening for a few minutes. She's at Larchmont now at her aunt's. I can't go there. But I'm allowed to meet her with a cab at the Grand Central Station to-morrow evening at the 8.30 train. We drive down Broadway to Wallack's at a gallop, where her mother and a box party will be

waiting for us in the lobby. Do you think she would listen to a declaration from me during that six or eight minutes under those circumstances? No. And what chance would I have in the theatre or afterward? None. No, dad, this is one tangle that your money can't unravel. We can't buy one minute of time with cash; if we could, rich people would live longer. There's no hope of getting a talk with Miss Lantry before she sails."

"All right, Richard, my boy," said old Anthony, cheerfully. "You may run along down to your club now. I'm glad it ain't your liver. But don't forget to burn a few punk sticks in the joss house to the great god Mazuma from time to time. You say money won't buy time? Well, of course, you can't order eternity wrapped up and delivered at your residence for a price, but I've seen Father Time get pretty bad stone bruises on his heels when he walked through the gold diggings."

That night came Aunt Ellen, gentle, sentimental, wrinkled, sighing, oppressed by wealth, in to Brother Anthony at his evening paper, and began discourse on the subject of lovers' woes.

"He told me all about it," said Brother Anthony, yawning. "I told him my bank account was at his service. And then he began to knock money. Said money couldn't help. Said the rules of society couldn't be bucked for a yard by a team of ten millionaires."

"Oh, Anthony," sighed Aunt Ellen, "I wish you would not think so much of money. Wealth is nothing where a true affection is concerned. Love is all-powerful. If he only had spoken earlier! She could not have refused our Richard. But now I fear it is too late. He will have no opportunity to address her. All your gold cannot bring happiness to your son."

At eight o'clock the next evening Aunt Ellen took a quaint old gold ring from a moth-eaten case and gave it to Richard.

"Wear it to-night, nephew," she begged. "Your mother gave

it to me. Good luck in love she said it brought. She asked me to give it to you when you had found the one you loved."

Young Rockwall took the ring reverently and tried it on his smallest finger. It slipped as far as the second joint and stopped. He took it off and stuffed it into his vest pocket, after the manner of man. And then he 'phoned for his cab.

At the station he captured Miss Lantry out of the gabbing mob at eight thirty-two.

"We mustn't keep mamma and the others waiting," said she.

"To Wallack's Theatre as fast as you can drive!" said Richard, loyally.

They whirled up Forty-second to Broadway, and then down the white-starred lane that leads from the soft meadows of sunset to the rocky hills of morning.

At Thirty-fourth Street young Richard quickly thrust up the trap and ordered the cabman to stop.

"I've dropped a ring," he apologized, as he climbed out. "It was my mother's, and I'd hate to lose it. I won't detain you a minute—I saw where it fell."

In less than a minute he was back in the cab with the ring.

But within that minute a crosstown car had stopped directly in front of the cab. The cab-man tried to pass to the left, but a heavy express wagon cut him off. He tried the right and had to back away from a furniture van that had no business to be there. He tried to back out, but dropped his reins and swore dutifully. He was blockaded in a tangled mess of vehicles and horses.

One of those street blockades had occurred that sometimes tie up commerce and movement quite suddenly in the big city.

"Why don't you drive on?" said Miss Lantry, impatiently. "We'll be late."

Richard stood up in the cab and looked around. He saw a

congested flood of wagons, trucks, cabs, vans and street cars filling the vast space where Broadway, Sixth Avenue, and Thirty-fourth Street cross one another as a twenty-six inch maiden fills her twenty-two inch girdle. And still from all the cross streets they were hurrying and rattling toward the converging point at full speed, and hurling themselves into the straggling mass, locking wheels and adding their drivers' imprecations to the clamor. The entire traffic of Manhattan seemed to have jammed itself around them. The oldest New Yorker among the thousands of spectators that lined the sidewalks had not witnessed a street blockade of the proportions of this one.

"I'm very sorry," said Richard, as he resumed his seat, "but it looks as if we are stuck. They won't get this jumble loosened up in an hour. It was my fault. If I hadn't dropped the ring we——"

"Let me see the ring," said Miss Lantry. "Now that it can't be helped, I don't care. I think theatres are stupid, anyway."

At 11 o'clock that night somebody tapped lightly on Anthony Rockwall's door.

"Come in," shouted Anthony, who was in a red dressing-gown, reading a book of piratical adventures.

Somebody was Aunt Ellen, looking like a gray-haired angel that had been left on earth by mistake.

"They're engaged, Anthony," she said, softly. "She has promised to marry our Richard. On their way to the theatre there was a street blockade, and it was two hours before their cab could get out of it.

"And oh, Brother Anthony, don't ever boast of the power of money again. A little emblem of true love—a little ring that symbolized unending and unmercenary affection—was the cause of our Richard finding his happiness. He dropped it in the street, and got out to recover it. And before they could continue the blockade occurred. He spoke to his love and won

her there while the cab was hemmed in. Money is dross compared with true love, Anthony."

"All right," said old Anthony. "I'm glad the boy has got what he wanted. I told him I wouldn't spare any expense in the matter if——"

"But, Brother Anthony, what good could your money have done?"

"Sister," said Anthony Rockwall, "I've got my pirate in a devil of a scrape. His ship has just been scuttled, and he's too good a judge of the value of money to let drown. I wish you would let me go on with this chapter."

The story should end here. I wish it would as heartily as you who read it wish it did. But we must go to the bottom of the well for truth.

The next day a person with red hands and a blue polka-dot necktie, who called himself Kelly, called at Anthony Rockwall's house, and was at once received in the library.

"Well," said Anthony, reaching for his check-book, "it was a good bilin' of soap. Let's see—you had $5,000 in cash."

"I paid out $300 more of my own," said Kelly. "I had to go a little above the estimate. I got the express wagons and cabs mostly for $5; but the trucks and two-horse teams mostly raised me to $10. The motormen wanted $10, and some of the loaded teams $20. The cops struck me hardest—$50 I paid two, and the rest $20 and $25. But didn't it work beautiful, Mr. Rockwall? I'm glad William A. Brady wasn't onto that little outdoor vehicle mob scene. I wouldn't want William to break his heart with jealousy. And never a rehearsal, either! The boys was on time to the fraction of a second. It was two hours before a snake could get below Greeley's statue."

"Thirteen hundred—there you are, Kelly," said Anthony, tearing off a check. "Your thousand, and the $300 you were out. You don't despise money, do you, Kelly?"

"Me?" said Kelly. "I can lick the man that invented poverty."

Anthony called Kelly when he was at the door.

"You didn't notice," said he, "anywhere in the tie-up, a kind of a fat boy without any clothes on shooting arrows around with a bow, did you?"

"Why, no," said Kelly, mystified. "I didn't. If he was like you say, maybe the cops pinched him before I got there."

"I thought the little rascal wouldn't be on hand," chuckled Anthony. "Good-by, Kelly."

Springtime à la Carte

IT WAS a day in March.

Never, never begin a story this way when you write one. No opening could possibly be worse. It is unimaginative, flat, dry, and likely to consist of mere wind. But in this instance it is allowable. For the following paragraph, which should have inaugurated the narrative, is too wildly extravagant and preposterous to be flaunted in the face of the reader without preparation.

Sarah was crying over her bill of fare.

Think of a New York girl shedding tears on the menu card!

To account for this you will be allowed to guess that the lobsters were all out, or that she had sworn ice-cream off during Lent, or that she had ordered onions, or that she had just come from a Hackett matinée. And then, all these theories being wrong, you will please let the story proceed.

The gentleman who announced that the world was an oyster which he with his sword would open made a larger hit than he deserved. It is not difficult to open an oyster with a

sword. But did you ever notice any one try to open the terrestrial bivalve with a typewriter? Like to wait for a dozen raw opened that way?

Sarah had managed to pry apart the shells with her unhandy weapon far enough to nibble a wee bit at the cold and clammy world within. She knew no more shorthand than if she had been a graduate in stenography just let slip upon the world by a business college. So, not being able to stenog, she could not enter that bright galaxy of office talent. She was a free-lance typewriter and canvassed for odd jobs of copying.

The most brilliant and crowning feat of Sarah's battle with the world was the deal she made with Schulenberg's Home Restaurant. The restaurant was next door to the old red brick in which she hall-roomed. One evening after dining at Schulenberg's 40-cent, five-course *table d'hôte* (served as fast as you throw the five baseballs at the colored gentleman's head) Sarah took away with her the bill of fare. It was written in an almost unreadable script neither English nor German, and so arranged that if you were not careful you began with a toothpick and rice pudding and ended with soup and the day of the week.

The next day Sarah showed Schulenberg a neat card on which the menu was beautifully typewritten with the viands temptingly marshalled under their right and proper heads from "hors d'œuvre" to "not responsible for over-coats and umbrellas."

Schulenberg became a naturalized citizen on the spot. Before Sarah left him she had him willingly committed to an agreement. She was to furnish typewritten bills of fare for the twenty-one tables in the restaurant—a new bill for each day's dinner, and new ones for breakfast and lunch as often as changes occurred in the food or as neatness required.

In return for this Schulenberg was to send three meals per diem to Sarah's hall room by a waiter—an obsequious one if

possible—and furnish her each afternoon with a pencil draft of what Fate had in store for Schulenberg's customers on the morrow.

Mutual satisfaction resulted from the agreement. Schulenberg's patrons now knew what the food they ate was called even if its nature sometimes puzzled them. And Sarah had food during a cold, dull winter, which was the main thing with her.

And then the almanac lied, and said that spring had come. Spring comes when it comes. The frozen snows of January still lay like adamant in the cross-town streets. The hand-organs still played "In the Good Old Summertime," with their December vivacity and expression. Men began to make thirty-day notes to buy Easter dresses. Janitors shut off steam. And when these things happen one may know that the city is still in the clutches of winter.

One afternoon Sarah shivered in her elegant hall bedroom; "house heated; scrupulously clean; conveniences; seen to be appreciated." She had no work to do except Schulenberg's menu cards. Sarah sat in her squeaky willow rocker, and looked out the window. The calendar on the wall kept crying to her: "Springtime is here, Sarah—springtime is here, I tell you. Look at me, Sarah, my figures show it. You've got a neat figure yourself, Sarah—a—nice springtime figure—why do you look out the window so sadly?"

Sarah's room was at the back of the house. Looking out the window she could see the windowless rear brick wall of the box factory on the next street. But the wall was clearest crystal; and Sarah was looking down a grassy lane shaded with cherry trees and elms and bordered with raspberry bushes and Cherokee roses.

Spring's real harbingers are too subtle for the eye and ear. Some must have the flowering crocus, the wood-starring dogwood, the voice of bluebird—even so gross a reminder as the

farewell handshake of the retiring buckwheat and oyster before they can welcome the Lady in Green to their dull bosoms. But to old earth's choicest kind there come straight, sweet messages from his newest bride, telling them they shall be no stepchildren unless they choose to be.

On the previous summer Sarah had gone into the country and loved a farmer.

(In writing your story never hark back thus. It is bad art, and cripples interest. Let it march, march.)

Sarah stayed two weeks at Sunnybrook Farm. There she learned to love old Farmer Franklin's son Walter. Farmers have been loved and wedded and turned out to grass in less time. But young Walter Franklin was a modern agriculturist. He had a telephone in his cow house, and he could figure up exactly what effect next year's Canada wheat crop would have on potatoes planted in the dark of the moon.

It was in this shaded and raspberried lane that Walter had wooed and won her. And together they had sat and woven a crown of dandelions for her hair. He had immoderately praised the effect of the yellow blossoms against her brown tresses; and she had left the chaplet there, and walked back to the house swinging her straw sailor in her hands.

They were to marry in the spring—at the very first signs of spring, Walter said. And Sarah came back to the city to pound her typewriter.

A knock at the door dispelled Sarah's visions of that happy day. A waiter had brought the rough pencil draft of the Home Restaurant's next day fare in old Schulenberg's angular hand.

Sarah sat down to her typewriter and slipped a card between the rollers. She was a nimble worker. Generally in an hour and a half the twenty-one menu cards were written and ready.

To-day there were more changes on the bill of fare than usual. The soups were lighter; pork was eliminated from the

ntrées, figuring only with Russian turnips among the roasts. The gracious spirit of spring pervaded the entire menu. Lamb, hat lately capered on the greening hillsides, was becoming xploited with the sauce that commemorated its gambols. The song of the oyster, though not silenced, was *dimuendo on amore*. The frying-pan seemed to be held, inactive, be- ind the beneficent bars of the broiler. The pie list swelled; he richer puddings had vanished; the sausage, with his drapery wrapped about him, barely lingered in a pleasant hanatopsis with the buckwheats and the sweet but doomed naple.

Sarah's fingers danced like midgets above a summer stream. Down through the courses she worked, giving each item its osition according to its length with an accurate eye.

Just above the desserts came the list of vegetables. Carrots nd peas, asparagus on toast, the perennial tomatoes and corn nd succotash, lima beans, cabbage—and then——

Sarah was crying over her bill of fare. Tears from the depths f some divine despair rose in her heart and gathered to her yes. Down went her head on the little typewriter stand; and he keyboard rattled a dry accompaniment to her moist sobs.

For she had received no letter from Walter in two weeks, nd the next item on the bill of fare was dandelions—dande- ons with some kind of egg—but bother the egg!—dande- ons, with whose golden blooms Walter had crowned her his ueen of love and future bride—dandelions, the harbingers of pring, her sorrow's crown of sorrow—reminder of her hap- iest days.

Madam, I dare you to smile until you suffer this test: Let he Marechal Niel roses that Percy brought you on the night ou gave him your heart be served as a salad with French ressing before your eyes at a Schulenberg *table d'hôte*. Had uliet so seen her love tokens dishonored the sooner would he have sought the lethean herbs of the good apothecary.

But what witch is Spring! Into the great cold city of stone and iron a message had to be sent. There was none to convey it but the little hardy courier of the fields with his rough green coat and modest air. He is a true soldier of fortune, this *dent-de-lion*—this lion's tooth, as the French chefs call him. Flowered, he will assist at love-making, wreathed in my lady's nut-brown hair; young and callow and unblossomed, he goes into the boiling pot and delivers the word of his sovereign mistress.

By and by Sarah forced back her tears. The cards must be written. But, still in a faint, golden glow from her dandelion dream, she fingered the typewriter keys absently for a little while, with her mind and heart in the meadow lane with her young farmer. But soon she came swiftly back to the rock-bound lanes of Manhattan, and the typewriter began to rattle and jump like a strike-breaker's motor car.

At 6 o'clock the waiter brought her dinner and carried away the typewritten bill of fare. When Sarah ate she set aside, with a sigh, the dish of dandelions with its crowning ovarious accompaniment. As this dark mass had been transformed from a bright and love-indorsed flower to be an ignominious vegetable, so had her summer hopes wilted and perished. Love may, as Shakespeare said, feed on itself: but Sarah could not bring herself to eat the dandelions that had graced, as ornaments, the first spiritual banquet of her heart's true affection.

At 7.30 the couple in the next room began to quarrel: the man in the room above sought for A on his flute; the gas went a little lower; three coal wagons started to unload—the only sound of which the phonograph is jealous; cats on the back fences slowly retreated toward Mukden. By these signs Sarah knew that it was time for her to read. She got out "The Cloister and the Hearth," the best non-selling book of the month, settled her feet on her trunk, and began to wander with Gerard.

The front door bell rang. The landlady answered it. Sarah eft Gerard and Denys treed by a bear and listened. Oh, yes; ou would, just as she did!

And then a strong voice was heard in the hall below, and arah jumped for her door, leaving the book on the floor and he first round easily the bear's.

You have guessed it. She reached the top of the stairs just s her farmer came up, three at a jump, and reaped and arnered her, with nothing left for the gleaners.

"Why haven't you written—oh, why?" cried Sarah.

"New York is a pretty large town," said Walter Franklin. I came in a week ago to your old address. I found that you ent away on a Thursday. That consoled some; it eliminated he possible Friday bad luck. But it didn't prevent my hunting or you with police and otherwise ever since!"

"I wrote!" said Sarah, vehemently.

"Never got it!"

"Then how did you find me?"

The young farmer smiled a springtime smile.

"I dropped into that Home Restaurant next door this eve- ing," said he. "I don't care who knows it; I like a dish of some ind of greens at this time of the year. I ran my eye down nat nice typewritten bill of fare looking for something in that ne. When I got below cabbage I turned my chair over and ollered for the proprietor. He told me where you lived."

"I remember," sighed Sarah, happily. "That was dandelions elow cabbage."

"I'd know that cranky capital W 'way above the line that our typewriter makes anywhere in the world," said Franklin.

"Why, there's no W in dandelions," said Sarah in surprise.

The young man drew the bill of fare from his pocket and ointed to a line.

Sarah recognized the first card she had typewritten that fternoon. There was still the rayed splotch in the upper right-

hand corner where a tear had fallen. But over the spot where one should have read the name of the meadow plant, the clinging memory of their golden blossoms had allowed her fingers to strike strange keys.

Between the red cabbage and the stuffed green peppers was the item:

"DEAREST WALTER, WITH HARD-BOILED EGG."

From the Cabby's Seat

THE CABBY has his point of view. It is more single-minded, perhaps, than that of a follower of any other calling. From the high, swaying seat of his hansom he looks upon his fellowmen as nomadic particles, of no account except when possessed of migratory desires. He is Jehu, and you are goods in transit. Be you President or vagabond, to cabby you are only a Fare. He takes you up, cracks his whip, joggles your vertebræ and sets you down.

When time for payment arrives, if you exhibit a familiarity with legal rates you come to know what contempt is; if you find that you have left your pocketbook behind you are made to realize the mildness of Dante's imagination.

It is not an extravagant theory that the cabby's singleness of purpose and concentrated view of life are the results of the hansom's peculiar construction. The cock-of-the-roost sits aloft like Jupiter on an unsharable seat, holding your fate between two thongs of inconstant leather. Helpless, ridiculous, confined, bobbing like a toy mandarin, you sit like a rat in a trap—you, before whom butlers cringe on solid land—and must squeak upward through a slit in your peripatetic sarcophagus to make your feeble wishes known.

Then, in a cab, you are not even an occupant; you are con-
nts. You are a cargo at sea, and the "cherub that sits up
oft" has Davy Jones's street and number by heart.

One night there were sounds of revelry in the big brick
nement house next door but one to McGary's Family Café.
he sounds seemed to emanate from the apartments of the
Valsh family. The sidewalk was obstructed by an assortment
interested neighbors, who opened a lane from time to time
r a hurrying messenger bearing from McGary's goods perti-
ent to festivity and diversion. The sidewalk contingent was
ngaged in comment and discussion from which it made no
fort to eliminate the news that Norah Walsh was being
arried.

In the fulness of time there was an eruption of the merry-
akers to the sidewalk. The uninvited guests enveloped and
ermeated them, and upon the night air rose joyous cries,
ngratulations, laughter, and unclassified noises born of Mc-
ary's oblations to the hymeneal scene.

Close to the curb stood Jerry O'Donovan's cab. Nighthawk
as Jerry called; but no more lustrous or cleaner hansom than
s ever closed its doors upon point lace and November vio-
ts. And Jerry's horse! I am within bounds when I tell you
at he was stuffed with oats until one of those old ladies who
ave their dishes unwashed at home and go about having
pressmen arrested, would have smiled—yes, smiled—to have
en him.

Among the shifting, sonorous, pulsing crowd glimpses
uld be had of Jerry's high hat, battered by the winds and
ins of many years; of his nose like a carrot, battered by the
olicsome, athletic progeny of millionaires and by contuma-
ous fares; of his brass-buttoned green coat, admired in the
cinity of McGary's. It was plain that Jerry had usurped the
nctions of his cab, and was carrying a "load." Indeed, the
ure may be extended and he be likened to a bread-wagon

if we admit the testimony of a youthful spectator, who was heard to remark "Jerry has got a bun."

From somewhere among the throng in the street or else out of the thin stream of pedestrians a young woman tripped and stood by the cab. The professional hawk's eye of Jerry caught the movement. He made a lurch for the cab, overturning three or four onlookers and himself—no! he caught the cap of a water-plug and kept his feet. Like a sailor shinning up the ratlins during a squall Jerry mounted to his professional seat. Once he was there McGary's liquids were baffled. He seesawed on the mizzenmast of his craft as safe as a Steeple Jack rigged to the flagpole of a skyscraper.

"Step in, lady," said Jerry, gathering his lines.

The young woman stepped into the cab; the doors shut with a bang; Jerry's whip cracked in the air; the crowd in the gutter scattered, and the fine hansom dashed away 'cross town.

When the oat-spry horse had hedged a little his first spurt of speed Jerry broke the lid of his cab and called down through the aperture in the voice of a cracked megaphone trying to please:

"Where, now, will ye be drivin' to?"

"Anywhere you please," came up the answer, musical and contented.

"'Tis drivin' for pleasure she is," thought Jerry. And then he suggested as a matter of course:

"Take a thrip around in the park, lady. 'Twill be illegant cool and fine."

"Just as you like," answered the fare, pleasantly.

The cab headed for Fifth Avenue and sped up that perfect street. Jerry bounced and swayed in his seat. The potent fluid of McGary were disquieted and they sent new fumes to his head. He sang an ancient song of Killisnook and brandished his whip like a baton.

Inside the cab the fare sat up straight on the cushions, ooking to right and left at the lights and houses. Even in he shadowed hansom her eyes shone like stars at twilight.

When they reached Fifty-ninth Street Jerry's head was obbing and his reins were slack. But his horse turned in hrough the park gate and began the old familiar nocturnal ound. And then the fare leaned back, entranced, and reathed deep the clean, wholesome odors of grass and leaf nd bloom. And the wise beast in the shafts, knowing his round, struck into his by-the-hour gait and kept to the right f the road.

Habit also struggled successfully against Jerry's increasing orpor. He raised the hatch of his storm-tossed vessel and nade the inquiry that cabbies do make in the park.

"Like shtop at the Cas-sino, lady? Gezzer r'freshm's, 'n ish'n the music. Ev'body shtops."

"I think that would be nice," said the fare.

They reined up with a plunge at the Casino entrance. The ab doors flew open. The fare stepped directly upon the floor. At once she was caught in a web of ravishing music and azzled by a panorama of lights and colors. Some one slipped little square card into her hand on which was printed a umber—34. She looked around and saw her cab twenty yards way already lining up in its place among the waiting mass f carriages, cabs, and motor cars. And then a man who eemed to be all shirt-front danced backward before her; and ext she was seated at a little table by a railing over which limbed a jessamine vine.

There seemed to be a wordless invitation to purchase; she onsulted a collection of small coins in a thin purse, and eceived from them license to order a glass of beer. There he sat, inhaling and absorbing it all—the new-colored, new-haped life in a fairy palace in an enchanted wood.

At fifty tables sat princes and queens clad in all the silks

and gems of the world. And now and then one of them would look curiously at Jerry's fare. They saw a plain figure dressed in a pink silk of the kind that is tempered by the word "foulard," and a plain face that wore a look of love of life that the queens envied.

Twice the long hands of the clocks went round. Royalties thinned from their *al fresco* thrones, and buzzed or clattered away in their vehicles of state. The music retired into cases of wood and bags of leather and baize. Waiters removed cloths pointedly near the plain figure sitting almost alone.

Jerry's fare rose, and held out her numbered card simply. "Is there anything coming on the ticket?" she asked.

A waiter told her it was her cab check, and that she should give it to the man at the entrance. This man took it, and called the number. Only three hansoms stood in line. The driver of one of them went and routed out Jerry asleep in his cab. He swore deeply, climbed to the captain's bridge and steered his craft to the pier. His fare entered, and the cab whirled into the cool fastnesses of the park along the shortest homeward cuts.

At the gate a glimmer of reason in the form of sudden suspicion seized upon Jerry's beclouded mind. One or two things occurred to him. He stopped his horse, raised the trap and dropped his phonographic voice, like a lead plummet through the aperture:

"I want to see four dollars before goin' any further on this thrip. Have ye got th' dough?"

"Four dollars!" laughed the fare, softly, "dear me, no. I've only got a few pennies and a dime or two."

Jerry shut down the trap and slashed his oat-fed horse. The clatter of hoofs strangled but could not drown the sound of his profanity. He shouted choking and gurgling curses at the starry heavens; he cut viciously with his whip at passing vehicles; he scattered fierce and everchanging oaths and impre-

ations along the streets, so that a late truck driver, crawling omeward, heard and was abashed. But he knew his recourse, nd made for it at a gallop.

At the house with the green lights beside the steps he ulled up. He flung wide the cab doors and tumbled heavily o the ground.

"Come on, you," he said, roughly.

His fare came forth with the Casino dreamy smile still on er plain face. Jerry took her by the arm and led her into the olice station. A gray-moustached sergeant looked keenly cross the desk. He and the cabby were no strangers.

"Sargeant," began Jerry in his old raucous, martyred, thunerous tones of complaint, "I've got a fare here that——"

Jerry paused. He drew a knotted, red hand across his brow. The fog set up by McGary was beginning to clear away.

"A fare, sargeant," he continued, with a grin, "that I want o introduce to ye. It's me wife that I married at ould man Valsh's this evening. And a divil of a time we had, 'tis rue. Shake hands wit th' sargeant, Norah, and we'll be off o home."

Before stepping into the cab Norah sighed profoundly.

"I've had such a nice time, Jerry," said she.

An Unfinished Story

VE NO LONGER GROAN and heap ashes upon our heads when he flames of Tophet are mentioned. For, even the preachers ave begun to tell us that God is radium, or ether or some ientific compound, and that the worst we wicked ones may xpect is a chemical reaction. This is a pleasing hypothesis;

but there lingers yet some of the old, goodly terror of orthodoxy.

There are but two subjects upon which one may discourse with a free imagination, and without the possibility of being controverted. You may talk of your dreams; and you may tell what you heard a parrot say. Both Morpheus and the bird are incompetent witnesses; and your listener dare not attack your recital. The baseless fabric of a vision, then, shall furnish my theme—chosen with apologies and regrets instead of the more limited field of pretty Polly's small talk.

I had a dream that was so far removed from the higher criticism that it had to do with the ancient, respectable, and lamented bar-of-judgment theory.

Gabriel had played his trump; and those of us who could not follow suit were arraigned for examination. I noticed at one side a gathering of professional bondsmen in solemn black and collars that buttoned behind; but it seemed there was some trouble about their real estate titles; and they did not appear to be getting any of us out.

A fly cop—an angel policeman—flew over to me and took me by the left wing. Near at hand was a group of very prosperous-looking spirits arraigned for judgment.

"Do you belong with that bunch?" the policeman asked.

"Who are they?" was my answer.

"Why," said he, "they are——"

But this irrelevant stuff is taking up space that the story should occupy.

Dulcie worked in a department store. She sold Hamburg edging, or stuffed peppers, or automobiles, or other little trinkets such as they keep in department stores. Of what she earned, Dulcie received six dollars per week. The remainder was credited to her and debited to somebody else's account in the ledger kept by G—— Oh, primal energy, you say, Reverend Doctor—— Well, then, in the Ledger of Primal Energy

During her first year in the store, Dulcie was paid five dollars per week. It would be instructive to know how she lived on that amount. Don't care? Very well; probably you are interested in larger amounts. Six dollars is a larger amount. I will tell you how she lived on six dollars per week.

One afternoon at six, when Dulcie was sticking her hat pin within an eighth of an inch of her *medulla oblongata,* she said to her chum, Sadie—the girl that waits on you with her left side:

"Say, Sade, I made a date for dinner this evening with Piggy."

"You never did!" exclaimed Sadie, admiringly. "Well, ain't you the lucky one? Piggy's an awful swell; and he always takes a girl to swell places. He took Blanche up to the Hoffman House one evening, where they have swell music, and you see a lot of swells. You'll have a swell time, Dulce."

Dulcie hurried homeward. Her eyes were shining, and her cheeks showed the delicate pink of life's—real life's—approaching dawn. It was Friday; and she had fifty cents left of her last week's wages.

The streets were filled with the rush-hour floods of people. The electric lights of Broadway were glowing—calling moths from miles, from leagues, from hundreds of leagues out of darkness around to come in and attend the singeing school. Men in accurate clothes, with faces like those carved on cherry stones by the old salts in sailors' homes, turned and stared at Dulcie as she sped, unheeding, past them. Manhattan, the night-blooming cereus, was beginning to unfold its dead-white, heavy-odored petals.

Dulcie stopped in a store where goods were cheap and bought an imitation lace collar with her fifty cents. That money was to have been spent otherwise—fifteen cents for supper, ten cents for breakfast, ten cents for lunch. Another time was to be added to her small store of savings; and five

cents was to be squandered for licorice drops—the kind that made your cheek look like the toothache, and last as long. The licorice was an extravagance—almost a carouse—but what is life without pleasures?

Dulcie lived in a furnished room. There is this difference between a furnished room and a boarding-house. In a furnished room, other people do not know it when you go hungry.

Dulcie went up to her room—the third-floor-back in a West Side brownstone-front. She lit the gas. Scientists tell us that the diamond is the hardest substance known. Their mistake. Landladies know of a compound beside which the diamond is as putty. They pack it in the tips of gas-burners; and one may stand on a chair and dig at it in vain until one's fingers are pink and bruised. A hairpin will not remove it; therefore let us call it immovable.

So Dulcie lit the gas. In its one-fourth-candle-power glow we will observe the room.

Couch-bed, dresser, table, washstand, chair—of this much the landlady was guilty. The rest was Dulcie's. On the dresser were her treasures—a gilt china vase presented to her by Sadie, a calendar issued by a pickle works, a book on the divination of dreams, some rice powder in a glass dish, and a cluster of artificial cherries tied with a pink ribbon.

Against the wrinkly mirror stood pictures of General Kitchener, William Muldoon, the Duchess of Marlborough, and Benvenuto Cellini. Against one wall was a plaster of Paris plaque of an O'Callahan in a Roman helmet. Near it was a violent oleograph of a lemon-colored child assaulting an inflammatory butterfly. This was Dulcie's final judgment in art; but it had never been upset. Her rest had never been disturbed by whispers of stolen copes; no critic had elevated his eyebrows at her infantile entomologist.

Piggy was to call for her at seven. While she swiftly makes ready, let us discreetly face the other way and gossip.

For the room, Dulcie paid two dollars per week. On weekdays her breakfast cost ten cents; she made coffee and cooked an egg over the gaslight while she was dressing. On Sunday mornings she feasted royally on veal chops and pineapple fritters at "Billy's" restaurant, at a cost of twenty-five cents—and tipped the waitress ten cents. New York presents so many temptations for one to run into extravagance. She had her lunches in the department-store restaurant at a cost of sixty cents for the week; dinners were $1.05. The evening papers—show me a New Yorker going without his daily paper!—came to six cents; and two Sunday papers—one for the personal column and the other to read—were ten cents. The total amounts to $4.76. Now, one has to buy clothes, and——

I give it up. I hear of wonderful bargains in fabrics, and of miracles performed with needle and thread; but I am in doubt. I hold my pen poised in vain when I would add to Dulcie's life some of those joys that belong to woman by virtue of all the unwritten, sacred, natural, inactive ordinances of the equity of heaven. Twice she had been to Coney Island and had ridden the hobby-horses. 'Tis a weary thing to count your pleasures by summers instead of by hours.

Piggy needs but a word. When the girls named him, an undeserving stigma was cast upon the noble family of swine. The words-of-three-letters lesson in the old blue spelling book begins with Piggy's biography. He was fat; he had the soul of a rat, the habits of a bat, and the magnanimity of a cat. . . . He wore expensive clothes; and was a connoisseur in starvation. He could look at a shop-girl and tell you to an hour how long it had been since she had eaten anything more nourishing than marshmallows and tea. He hung about the shopping districts, and prowled around in department stores with his invitations to dinner. Men who escort dogs upon the streets

at the end of a string look down upon him. He is a type; I can dwell upon him no longer; my pen is not the kind intended for him; I am no carpenter.

At ten minutes to seven Dulcie was ready. She looked at herself in the wrinkly mirror. The reflection was satisfactory. The dark blue dress, fitting without a wrinkle, the hat with its jaunty black feather, the but-slightly-soiled gloves—all representing self-denial, even of food itself—were vastly becoming.

Dulcie forgot everything else for a moment except that she was beautiful, and that life was about to lift a corner of its mysterious veil for her to observe its wonders. No gentleman had ever asked her out before. Now she was going for a brief moment into the glitter and exalted show.

The girls said that Piggy was a "spender." There would be a grand dinner, and music, and splendidly dressed ladies to look at and things to eat that strangely twisted the girls' jaws when they tried to tell about them. No doubt she would be asked out again.

There was a blue pongee suit in a window that she knew—by saving twenty cents a week instead of ten in—let's see—— Oh, it would run into years! But there was a second-hand store in Seventh Avenue where——

Somebody knocked at the door. Dulcie opened it. The landlady stood there with a spurious smile, sniffing for cooking by stolen gas.

"A gentleman's downstairs to see you," she said. "Name is Mr. Wiggins."

By such epithet was Piggy known to unfortunate ones who had to take him seriously.

Dulcie turned to the dresser to get her handkerchief; and then she stopped still, and bit her underlip hard. While looking in her mirror she had seen fairyland and herself, a princess, just awakening from a long slumber. She had forgotten

one that was watching her with sad, beautiful, stern eyes—the only one there was to approve or condemn what she did. Straight and slender and tall, with a look of sorrowful reproach on his handsome, melancholy face, General Kitchener fixed his wonderful eyes on her out of his gilt photograph frame on the dresser.

Dulcie turned like an automatic doll to the landlady.

"Tell him I can't go," she said, dully. "Tell him I'm sick, or something. Tell him I'm not going out."

After the door was closed and locked, Dulcie fell upon her bed, crushing her black tip, and cried for ten minutes. General Kitchener was her only friend. He was Dulcie's ideal of a gallant knight. He looked as if he might have a secret sorrow, and his wonderful moustache was a dream, and she was a little afraid of that stern yet tender look in his eyes. She used to have little fancies that he would call at the house sometime, and ask for her, with his sword clanking against his high boots. Once, when a boy was rattling a piece of chain against a lamp post she had opened the window and looked out. But there was no use. She knew that General Kitchener was away over in Japan, leading his army against the savage Turks; and he would never step out of his gilt frame for her. Yet one look from him had vanquished Piggy that night. Yes, for that night.

When her cry was over Dulcie got up and took off her best dress, and put on her old blue kimono. She wanted no dinner. She sang two verses of "Sammy." Then she became intensely interested in a little red speck on the side of her nose. And after that was attended to, she drew up a chair to the rickety table, and told her fortune with an old deck of cards.

"The horrid, impudent thing!" she said aloud. "And I never gave him a word or a look to make him think it!"

At nine o'clock Dulcie took a tin box of crackers and a little pot of raspberry jam out of her trunk and had a feast. She

offered General Kitchener some jam on a cracker; but he only looked at her as the sphinx would have looked at a butterfly —if there are butterflies in the desert.

"Don't eat it if you don't want to," said Dulcie. "And don't put on so many airs and scold so with your eyes. I wonder if you'd be so superior and snippy if you had to live on six dollars a week."

It was not a good sign for Dulcie to be rude to General Kitchener. And then she turned Benvenuto Cellini face downward with a severe gesture. But that was not inexcusable; for she had always thought he was Henry VIII, and she did not approve of him.

At half-past nine Dulcie took a last look at the pictures on the dresser, turned out the light and skipped into bed. It's an awful thing to go to bed with a good-night look at General Kitchener, William Muldoon, the Duchess of Marlborough, and Benvenuto Cellini.

This story doesn't really get anywhere at all. The rest of it comes later—sometime when Piggy asks Dulcie again to dine with him, and she is feeling lonelier than usual, and General Kitchener happens to be looking the other way; and then——

As I said before, I dreamed that I was standing near a crowd of prosperous-looking angels, and a policeman took me by the wing and asked if I belonged with them.

"Who are they?" I asked.

"Why," said he, "they are the men who hired working-girls, and paid 'em five or six dollars a week to live on. Are you one of the bunch?"

"Not on your immortality," said I. "I'm only a fellow that set fire to an orphan asylum, and murdered a blind man for his pennies."

The Romance of a Busy Broker

Pitcher, confidential clerk in the office of Harvey Maxwell, broker, allowed a look of mild interest and surprise to visit his usually expressionless countenance when his employer briskly entered at half-past nine in company with his young lady stenographer. With a snappy "Good-morning, Pitcher," Maxwell dashed at his desk as though he were intending to leap over it, and then plunged into the great heap of letters and telegrams waiting there for him.

The young lady had been Maxwell's stenographer for a year. She was beautiful in a way that was decidedly unstenographic. She forewent the pomp of the alluring pompadour. She wore no chains, bracelets, or lockets. She had not the air of being about to accept an invitation to luncheon. Her dress was gray and plain, but it fitted her figure with fidelity and discretion. In her neat black turban hat was the gold-green wing of a macaw. On this morning she was softly and shyly radiant. Her eyes were dreamily bright, her cheeks genuine peach-blow, her expression a happy one, tinged with reminiscence.

Pitcher, still mildly curious, noticed a difference in her ways this morning. Instead of going straight into the adjoining room, where her desk was, she lingered, slightly irresolute, in the outer office. Once she moved over by Maxwell's desk, near enough for him to be aware of her presence.

The machine sitting at that desk was no longer a man; it was a busy New York broker, moved by buzzing wheels and uncoiling springs.

"Well—what is it? Anything?" asked Maxwell, sharply. His opened mail lay like a bank of stage snow on his crowded

desk. His keen gray eye, impersonal and brusque, flashed upon her half impatiently.

"Nothing," answered the stenographer, moving away with a little smile.

"Mr. Pitcher," she said to the confidential clerk, "did Mr. Maxwell say anything yesterday about engaging another stenographer?"

"He did," answered Pitcher. "He told me to get another one. I notified the agency yesterday afternoon to send over a few samples this morning. It's 9.45 o'clock, and not a single picture hat or piece of pineapple chewing gum has showed up yet."

"I will do the work as usual, then," said the young lady, "until some one comes to fill the place." And she went to her desk at once and hung the black turban hat with the gold-green macaw wing in its accustomed place.

He who has been denied the spectacle of a busy Manhattan broker during a rush of business is handicapped for the profession of anthropology. The poet sings of the "crowded hour of glorious life." The broker's hour is not only crowded, but minutes and seconds are hanging to all the straps and packing both front and rear platforms.

And this day was Harvey Maxwell's busy day. The ticker began to reel out jerkily its fitful coils of tape, the desk telephone had a chronic attack of buzzing. Men began to throng into the office and call at him over the railing, jovially, sharply, viciously, excitedly. Messenger boys ran in and out with messages and telegrams. The clerks in the office jumped about like sailors during a storm. Even Pitcher's face relaxed into something resembling animation.

On the Exchange there were hurricanes and landslides and snowstorms and glaciers and volcanoes, and those elemental disturbances were reproduced in miniature in the broker's offices. Maxwell shoved his chair against the wall and transacted

usiness after the manner of a toe dancer. He jumped from icker to 'phone, from desk to door with the trained agility of harlequin.

In the midst of this growing and important stress the broker ecame suddenly aware of a high-rolled fringe of golden hair nder a nodding canopy of velvet and ostrich tips, an imitaion sealskin sacque and a string of beads as large as hickory uts, ending near the floor with a silver heart. There was a elf-possessed young lady connected with these accessories; nd Pitcher was there to construe her.

"Lady from the Stenographer's Agency to see about the osition," said Pitcher.

Maxwell turned half around, with his hands full of papers nd ticker tape.

"What position?" he asked, with a frown.

"Position of stenographer," said Pitcher. "You told me yesrday to call them up and have one sent over this morning."

"You are losing your mind, Pitcher," said Maxwell. "Why hould I have given you any such instructions? Miss Leslie as given perfect satisfaction during the year she has been ere. The place is hers as long as she chooses to retain it. here's no place open here, madam. Countermand that order ith the agency, Pitcher, and don't bring any more of 'em in ere."

The silver heart left the office, swinging and banging itself ndependently against the office furniture as it indignantly dearted. Pitcher seized a moment to remark to the bookkeeper hat the "old man" seemed to get more absent-minded and orgetful every day of the world.

The rush and pace of business grew fiercer and faster. On he floor they were pounding half a dozen stocks in which Maxwell's customers were heavy investors. Orders to buy and ell were coming and going as swift as the flight of swallows. ome of his own holdings were imperilled, and the man was

working like some high-geared, delicate, strong machine—strung to full tension, going at full speed, accurate, never hesitating, with the proper word and decision and act ready and prompt as clockwork. Stocks and bonds, loans and mortgages, margins and securities—here was a world of finance, and there was no room in it for the human world or the world of nature.

When the luncheon hour drew near there came a slight lull in the uproar.

Maxwell stood by his desk with his hands full of telegrams and memoranda, with a fountain pen over his right ear and his hair hanging in disorderly strings over his forehead. His window was open, for the beloved janitress, Spring, had turned on a little warmth through the waking registers of the earth.

And through the window came a wandering—perhaps a lost—odor—a delicate, sweet odor of lilac that fixed the broker for a moment immovable. For this odor belonged to Miss Leslie; it was her own, and hers only.

The odor brought her vividly, almost tangibly before him. The world of finance dwindled suddenly to a speck. And she was in the next room—twenty steps away.

"By George, I'll do it now," said Maxwell, half aloud. "I'll ask her now. I wonder I didn't do it long ago."

He dashed into the inner office with the haste of a short trying to cover. He charged upon the desk of the stenographer.

She looked up at him with a smile. A soft pink crept over her cheek, and her eyes were kind and frank. Maxwell leaned one elbow on her desk. He still clutched fluttering papers with both hands and the pen was above his ear.

"Miss Leslie," he began, hurriedly, "I have but a moment to spare. I want to say something in that moment. Will you be my wife? I haven't had time to make love to you in the ordinary way, but I really do love you. Talk quick, please—those fellows are clubbing the stuffing out of Union Pacific."

"Oh, what are you talking about?" exclaimed the young lady. She rose to her feet and gazed upon him, round-eyed.

"Don't you understand?" said Maxwell, restively. "I want you to marry me. I love you, Miss Leslie. I wanted to tell you, and I snatched a minute when things had slackened up a bit. They're calling me for the 'phone now. Tell 'em to wait a minute, Pitcher. Won't you, Miss Leslie?"

The stenographer acted very queerly. At first she seemed overcome with amazement; then tears flowed from her wondering eyes; and then she smiled sunnily through them, and one of her arms slid tenderly about the broker's neck.

"I know now," she said, softly. "It's this old business that has driven everything else out of your head for the time. I was frightened at first. Don't you remember, Harvey? We were married last evening at 8 o'clock in the Little Church around the Corner."

The Furnished Room

Restless, shifting, fugacious as time itself is a certain vast bulk of the population of the red brick district of the lower West Side. Homeless, they have a hundred homes. They flit from furnished room to furnished room, transients forever—transients in abode, transients in heart and mind. They sing "Home, Sweet Home" in ragtime; they carry their *lares et penates* in a bandbox; their vine is entwined about a picture hat; a rubber plant is their fig tree.

Hence the houses of this district, having had a thousand dwellers, should have a thousand tales to tell, mostly dull ones, no doubt; but it would be strange if there could not be found a ghost or two in the wake of all these vagrant guests.

One evening after dark a young man prowled among these crumbling red mansions, ringing their bells. At the twelfth he rested his lean hand-baggage upon the step and wiped the dust from his hatband and forehead. The bell sounded faint and far away in some remote, hollow depths.

To the door of this, the twelfth house whose bell he had rung, came a housekeeper who made him think of an unwholesome, surfeited worm that had eaten its nut to a hollow shell and now sought to fill the vacancy with edible lodgers.

He asked if there was a room to let.

"Come in," said the housekeeper. Her voice came from her throat; her throat seemed lined with fur. "I have the third-floor-back, vacant since a week back. Should you wish to look at it?"

The young man followed her up the stairs. A faint light from no particular source mitigated the shadows of the halls. They trod noiselessly upon a stair carpet that its own loom would have forsworn. It seemed to have become vegetable; to have degenerated in that rank, sunless air to lush lichen or spreading moss that grew in patches to the staircase and was viscid under the foot like organic matter. At each turn of the stairs were vacant niches in the wall. Perhaps plants had once been set within them. If so they had died in that foul and tainted air. It may be that statues of the saints had stood there, but it was not difficult to conceive that imps and devils had dragged them forth in the darkness and down to the unholy depths of some furnished pit below.

"This is the room," said the housekeeper, from her furry throat. "It's a nice room. It ain't often vacant. I had some most elegant people in it last summer—no trouble at all, and paid in advance to the minute. The water's at the end of the hall. Sprowls and Mooney kept it three months. They done a vaudeville sketch. Miss B'retta Sprowls—you may have heard of her—Oh, that was just the stage names—right there

over the dresser is where the marriage certificate hung, framed. The gas is here, and you see there is plenty of closet room. It's a room everybody likes. It never stays idle long."

"Do you have many theatrical people rooming here?" asked the young man.

"They comes and goes. A good proportion of my lodgers is connected with the theatres. Yes, sir, this is the theatrical district. Actor people never stays long anywhere. I get my share. Yes, they comes and they goes."

He engaged the room, paying for a week in advance. He was tired, he said, and would take possession at once. He counted out the money. The room had been made ready, she said, even to towels and water. As the housekeeper moved away he put, for the thousandth time, the question that he carried at the end of his tongue.

"A young girl—Miss Vashner—Miss Eloise Vashner—do you remember such a one among your lodgers? She would be singing on the stage, most likely. A fair girl, of medium height and slender, with reddish, gold hair and dark mole near her left eyebrow."

"No, I don't remember the name. Them stage people has names they change as often as their rooms. They comes and they goes. No, I don't call that one to mind."

No. Always no. Five months of ceaseless interrogation and the inevitable negative. So much time spent by day in questioning managers, agents, schools and choruses; by night among the audiences of theatres from all-star casts down to music halls so low that he dreaded to find what he most hoped for. He who had loved her best had tried to find her. He was sure that since her disappearance from home this great, water-girt city held her somewhere, but it was like a monstrous quicksand, shifting its particles constantly, with no foundation, its upper granules of to-day buried to-morrow in ooze and slime.

The furnished room received its latest guest with a first glow of pseudo-hospitality, a hectic, haggard, perfunctory welcome like the specious smile of a demirep. The sophistical comfort came in reflected gleams from the decayed furniture, the ragged brocade upholstery of a couch and two chairs, a foot-wide cheap pier glass between the two windows, from one or two gilt picture frames and a brass bedstead in a corner.

The guest reclined, inert, upon a chair, while the room, confused in speech as though it were an apartment in Babel, tried to discourse to him of its divers tenantry.

A polychromatic rug like some brilliant-flowered, rectangular, tropical islet lay surrounded by a billowy sea of soiled matting. Upon the gay-papered wall were those pictures that pursue the homeless one from house to house—The Huguenot Lovers, The First Quarrel, The Wedding Breakfast, Psyche at the Fountain. The mantel's chastely severe outline was ingloriously veiled behind some pert drapery drawn rakishly askew like the sashes of the Amazonian ballet. Upon it was some desolate flotsam cast aside by the room's marooned when a lucky sail had borne them to a fresh port—a trifling vase or two, pictures of actresses, a medicine bottle, some stray cards out of a deck.

One by one, as the characters of a cryptograph became explicit, the little signs left by the furnished room's procession of guests developed a significance. The threadbare space in the rug in front of the dresser told that lovely women had marched in the throng. The tiny fingerprints on the wall spoke of little prisoners trying to feel their way to sun and air. A splattered stain, raying like the shadow of a bursting bomb, witnessed where a hurled glass or bottle had splintered with its contents against the wall. Across the pier glass had been scrawled with a diamond in staggering letters the name "Marie." It seemed that the succession of dwellers in the furnished room had turned in fury—perhaps tempted beyond

forbearance by its garish coldness—and wreaked upon it their passions. The furniture was chipped and bruised; the couch, distorted by bursting springs, seemed a horrible monster that had been slain during the stress of some grotesque convulsion. Some more potent upheaval had cloven a great slice from the marble mantel. Each plank in the floor owned its particular cant and shriek as from a separate and individual agony. It seemed incredible that all this malice and injury had been wrought upon the room by those who had called it for a time their home; and yet it may have been the cheated home instinct surviving blindly, the resentful rage at false household gods that had kindled their wrath. A hut that is our own we can sweep and adorn and cherish.

The young tenant in the chair allowed these thoughts to file, soft-shod, through his mind, while there drifted into the room furnished sounds and furnished scents. He heard in one room a tittering and incontinent, slack laughter; in others the monologue of a scold, the rattling of dice, a lullaby, and one crying dully; above him a banjo tinkled with spirit. Doors banged somewhere; the elevated trains roared intermittently; a cat yowled miserably upon a back fence. And he breathed the breath of the house—a dank savor rather than a smell—a cold, musty effluvium as from underground vaults mingled with the reeking exhalations of linoleum and mildewed and rotten woodwork.

Then suddenly, as he rested there, the room was filled with the strong, sweet odor of mignonette. It came as upon a single puff of wind with such sureness and fragrance and emphasis that it almost seemed a living visitant. And the man cried aloud: "What, dear?" as if he had been called, and sprang up and faced about. The rich odor clung to him and wrapped him around. He reached out his arms for it, all his senses for the time confused and commingled. How could one be peremptorily called by an odor? Surely it must have been a

sound. But, was it not the sound that had touched, that had caressed him?

"She has been in this room," he cried, and he sprang to wrest from it a token, for he knew he would recognize the smallest thing that had belonged to her or that she had touched. This enveloping scent of mignonette, the odor that she had loved and made her own—whence came it?

The room had been but carelessly set in order. Scattered upon the flimsy dresser scarf were half a dozen hairpins—those discreet, indistinguishable friends of womankind, feminine of gender, infinite mood and uncommunicative of tense. These he ignored, conscious of their triumphant lack of identity. Ransacking the drawers of the dresser he came upon a discarded, tiny, ragged handkerchief. He pressed it to his face. It was racy and insolent with heliotrope; he hurled it to the floor. In another drawer he found odd buttons, a theatre programme, a pawnbroker's card, two lost marshmallows, a book on the divination of dreams. In the last was a woman's black satin hair bow, which halted him, poised between ice and fire. But the black satin hair bow also is femininity's demure, impersonal common ornament and tells no tales.

And then he traversed the room like a hound on the scent, skimming the walls, considering the corners of the bulging matting on his hands and knees, rummaging mantel and tables, the curtains and hangings, the drunken cabinet in the corner, for a visible sign, unable to perceive that she was there beside, around, against, within, above him, clinging to him, wooing him, calling him so poignantly through the finer senses that even his grosser ones became cognizant of the call. Once again he answered loudly: "Yes, dear!" and turned, wild-eyed, to gaze on vacancy, for he could not yet discern form and color and love and outstretched arms in the odor of mignonette. Oh, God! whence that odor, and since when have odors had a voice to call? Thus he groped.

He burrowed in crevices and corners, and found corks and igarettes. These he passed in passive contempt. But once he ound in a fold of the matting a half-smoked cigar, and this e ground beneath his heel with a green and trenchant oath. Ie sifted the room from end to end. He found dreary and gnoble small records of many a peripatetic tenant; but of her vhom he sought, and who may have lodged there, and whose pirit seemed to hover there, he found no trace.

And then he thought of the housekeeper.

He ran from the haunted room downstairs and to a door hat showed a crack of light. She came out to his knock. He mothered his excitement as best he could.

"Will you tell me, madam," he besought her, "who occuied the room I have before I came?"

"Yes, sir. I can tell you again. 'Twas Sprowls and Mooney, s I said. Miss B'retta Sprowls it was in the theatres, but Missis Mooney she was. My house is well known for repectability. The marriage certificate hung, framed, on a nail ver——"

"What kind of a lady was Miss Sprowls—in looks, I mean?"

"Why, black-haired, sir, short, and stout, with a comical ace. They left a week ago Tuesday."

"And before they occupied it?"

"Why, there was a single gentleman connected with the raying business. He left owing me a week. Before him as Missis Crowder and her two children, that stayed four nonths; and back of them was old Mr. Doyle, whose sons aid for him. He kept the room six months. That goes back year, sir, and further I do not remember."

He thanked her and crept back to his room. The room was ead. The essence that had vivified it was gone. The perfume f mignonette had departed. In its place was the old, stale dor of mouldy house furniture, of atmosphere in storage.

The ebbing of his hope drained his faith. He sat staring

at the yellow, singing gaslight. Soon he walked to the bed and began to tear the sheets into strips. With the blade of his knife he drove them tightly into every crevice around windows and door. When all was snug and taut he turned out the light, turned the gas full on again and laid himself gratefully upon the bed.

. . . . . .

It was Mrs. McCool's night to go with the can for beer. So she fetched it and sat with Mrs. Purdy in one of those subterranean retreats where housekeepers foregather and the worm dieth seldom.

"I rented out my third-floor-back this evening," said Mrs. Purdy, across a fine circle of foam. "A young man took it. He went up to bed two hours ago."

"Now, did ye, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am?" said Mrs. McCool, with intense admiration. "You do be a wonder for rentin' rooms of that kind. And did ye tell him, then?" she concluded in a husky whisper laden with mystery.

"Rooms," said Mrs. Purdy, in her furriest tones, "are furnished for to rent. I did not tell him, Mrs. McCool."

"'Tis right ye are, ma'am; 'tis by renting rooms we kape alive. Ye have the rale sense for business, ma'am. There be many people will rayjict the rentin' of a room if they be tould a suicide has been after dyin' in the bed of it."

"As you say, we has our living to be making," remarked Mrs. Purdy.

"Yis, ma'am; 'tis true. 'Tis just one wake ago this day I helped ye lay out the third-floor-back. A pretty slip of a colleen she was to be killin' herself wid the gas—a swate little face she had, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am."

"She'd a-been called handsome, as you say," said Mrs. Purdy, assenting but critical, "but for that mole she had a-growin' by her left eyebrow. Do fill up your glass again, Mrs. McCool."

Roads of Destiny

I go to seek on many roads
What is to be.
True heart and strong, with love to light—
Will they not bear me in the fight
To order, shun or wield or mould
My Destiny?

UNPUBLISHED POEMS OF DAVID MIGNOT.

HE song was over. The words were David's; the air, one of
e countryside. The company about the inn table applauded
artily, for the young poet paid for the wine. Only the no-
ry, M. Papineau, shook his head a little at the lines, for he
as a man of books, and he had not drunk with the rest.
David went out into the village street, where the night air
ove the wine vapor from his head. And then he remembered
at he and Yvonne had quarrelled that day, and that he had
solved to leave his home that night to seek fame and honor
the great world outside.

"When my poems are on every man's tongue," he told him-
lf, in a fine exhilaration, "she will, perhaps, think of the
ard words she spoke this day."

Except the roysterers in the tavern, the village folk were
ed. David crept softly into his room in the shed of his fa-
er's cottage and made a bundle of his small store of cloth-
g. With this upon a staff, he set his face outward upon the
ad that ran from Vernoy.

He passed his father's herd of sheep huddled in their
ghtly pen—the sheep he herded daily, leaving them to scat-
r while he wrote verses on scraps of paper. He saw a light
t shining in Yvonne's window, and a weakness shook his

purpose of a sudden. Perhaps that light meant that she rued sleepless, her anger, and that morning might—— But, no! Hi decision was made. Vernoy was no place for him. Not on soul there could share his thoughts. Out along that road la his fate and his future.

Three leagues across the dim, moonlit champaign ran th road, straight as a plowman's furrow. It was believed in th village that the road ran to Paris, at least; and this nam the poet whispered often to himself as he walked. Never s far from Vernoy had David travelled before.

The Left Branch

Three leagues, then, the road ran, and turned into a puzzl It joined with another and a larger road at right angles. Davi stood, uncertain, for a while, and then took the road to th left.

Upon this more important highway were, imprinted in th dust, wheel tracks left by the recent passage of some vehicl Some half an hour later these traces were verified by the sigh of a ponderous carriage mired in a little brook at the botto of a steep hill. The driver and postilions were shouting an tugging at the horses' bridles. On the road at one side stoo a huge, black-clothed man and a slender lady wrapped in long, light cloak.

David saw the lack of skill in the efforts of the servants. H quietly assumed control of the work. He directed the outride to cease their clamor at the horses and to exercise the strength upon the wheels. The driver alone urged the anima with his familiar voice; David himself heaved a powerf shoulder at the rear of the carriage, and with one harmoniou tug the great vehicle rolled up on solid ground. The outride climbed to their places.

David stood for a moment upon one foot. The huge gentl

an waved a hand. "You will enter the carriage," he said, in a ice large, like himself, but smoothed by art and habit. Obe-ence belonged in the path of such a voice. Brief as was the ung poet's hesitation, it was cut shorter still by a renewal of e command. David's foot went to the step. In the darkness perceived dimly the form of the lady upon the rear seat. e was about to seat himself opposite, when the voice again ayed him to its will. "You will sit at the lady's side."

The gentleman swung his great weight to the forward seat. ne carriage proceeded up the hill. The lady was shrunk, si-nt, into her corner. David could not estimate whether she s old or young, but a delicate, mild perfume from her othes stirred his poet's fancy to the belief that there was reliness beneath the mystery. Here was an adventure such he had often imagined. But as yet he held no key to it, no word was spoken while he sat with his impenetrable mpanions.

In an hour's time David perceived through the window that e vehicle traversed the street of some town. Then it stopped front of a closed and darkened house, and a postilion ghted to hammer impatiently upon the door. A latticed ndow above flew wide and a night-capped head popped t.

'Who are ye that disturb honest folk at this time of night? y house is closed. 'Tis too late for profitable travellers to abroad. Cease knocking at my door, and be off."

'Open!" spluttered the postilion, loudly; "open for Mon-gneur, the Marquis de Beaupertuys."

'Ah!" cried the voice above. "Ten thousand pardons, my d. I did not know—the hour is so late—at once shall the or be opened, and the house placed at my lord's disposal." Inside was heard the clink of chain and bar, and the door s flung open. Shivering with chill and apprehension, the

landlord of the Silver Flagon stood, half clad, candle in hand upon the threshold.

David followed the marquis out of the carriage. "Assist the lady," he was ordered. The poet obeyed. He felt her small hand tremble as he guided her descent. "Into the house," was the next command.

The room was the long dining-hall of the tavern. A great oak table ran down its length. The huge gentleman seated himself in a chair at the nearer end. The lady sank into another against the wall, with an air of great weariness. David stood, considering how best he might now take his leave and continue upon his way.

"My lord," said the landlord, bowing to the floor, "h-had I ex-expected this honor, entertainment would have been ready. T-t-there is wine and cold fowl and m-m-maybe——"

"Candles," said the marquis, spreading the fingers of one plump white hand in a gesture he had.

"Y-yes, my lord." He fetched half a dozen candles, lighted them, and set them upon the table.

"If monsieur would, perhaps, deign to taste a certain Burgundy—there is a cask——"

"Candles," said monsieur, spreading his fingers.

"Assuredly—quickly—I fly, my lord."

A dozen more lighted candles shone in the hall. The great bulk of the marquis overflowed his chair. He was dressed in fine black from head to foot save for the snowy ruffles at his wrist and throat. Even the hilt and scabbard of his sword were black. His expression was one of sneering pride. The ends of an upturned moustache reached nearly to his mocking eyes.

The lady sat motionless, and now David perceived that she was young, and possessed a pathetic and appealing beauty. He was startled from the contemplation of her forlorn loveliness by the booming voice of the marquis.

"What is your name and pursuit?"

"David Mignot. I am a poet."

The moustache of the marquis curled nearer to his eyes. "How do you live?"

"I am also a shepherd; I guarded my father's flock," David nswered, with his head high, but a flush upon his cheek.

"Then listen, master shepherd and poet, to the fortune you ave blundered upon to-night. This lady is my niece, Made- oiselle Lucie de Varennes. She is of noble descent and is ossessed of ten thousand francs a year in her own right. As o her charms, you have but to observe for yourself. If the nventory pleases your shepherd's heart, she becomes your ife at a word. Do not interrupt me. To-night I conveyed er to the château of the Comte de Villemaur, to whom her and had been promised. Guests were present; the priest was aiting; her marriage to one eligible in rank and fortune was eady to be accomplished. At the altar this demoiselle, so eek and dutiful, turned upon me like a leopardess, charged e with cruelty and crimes, and broke, before the gaping riest, the troth I had plighted for her. I swore there and then, y ten thousand devils, that she should marry the first man e met after leaving the château, be he prince, charcoal- urner, or thief. You, shepherd, are the first. Mademoiselle ust be wed this night. If not you, then another. You have en minutes in which to make your decision. Do not vex me ith words or questions. Ten minutes, shepherd; and they are peeding."

The marquis drummed loudly with his white fingers upon he table. He sank into a veiled attitude of waiting. It was as some great house had shut its doors and windows against pproach. David would have spoken, but the huge man's bear- ng stopped his tongue. Instead, he stood by the lady's chair nd bowed.

"Mademoiselle," he said, and he marvelled to find his words

flowing easily before so much elegance and beauty. "You have heard me say I was a shepherd. I have also had the fancy, at times, that I am a poet. If it be the test of a poet to adore and cherish the beautiful, that fancy is now strengthened. Can I serve you in any way, mademoiselle?"

The young woman looked up at him with eyes dry and mournful. His frank, glowing face, made serious by the gravity of the adventure, his strong, straight figure and the liquid sympathy in his blue eyes, perhaps, also, her imminent need of long-denied help and kindness, thawed her to sudden tears.

"Monsieur," she said, in low tones, "you look to be true and kind. He is my uncle, the brother of my father, and my only relative. He loved my mother, and he hates me because I am like her. He has made my life one long terror. I am afraid of his very looks, and never before dared to disobey him. But to-night he would have married me to a man three times my age. You will forgive me for bringing this vexation upon you, monsieur. You will, of course, decline this mad act he tries to force upon you. But let me thank you for your generous words, at least. I have had none spoken to me in so long."

There was now something more than generosity in the poet's eyes. Poet he must have been, for Yvonne was forgotten; this fine, new loveliness held him with its freshness and grace. The subtle perfume from her filled him with strange emotions. His tender look fell warmly upon her. She leaned to it, thirstily.

"Ten minutes," said David, "is given me in which to do what I would devote years to achieve. I will not say I pity you, mademoiselle; it would not be true—I love you. I cannot ask love from you yet, but let me rescue you from this cruel man, and, in time, love may come. I think I have a future. I will not always be a shepherd. For the present I will cherish you with all my heart and make your life less sad. Will you trust your fate to me, mademoiselle?"

"Ah, you would sacrifice yourself from pity!"

"From love. The time is almost up, mademoiselle."

"You will regret it, and despise me."

"I will live only to make you happy, and myself worthy of u."

Her fine small hand crept into his from beneath her cloak. "I will trust you," she breathed, "with my life. And—and ve—may not be so far off as you think. Tell him. Once away om the power of his eyes I may forget."

David went and stood before the marquis. The black figure rred, and the mocking eyes glanced at the great hall clock. "Two minutes to spare. A shepherd requires eight minutes decide whether he will accept a bride of beauty and in- me! Speak up, shepherd, do you consent to become made- oiselle's husband?"

"Mademoiselle," said David, standing proudly, "has done e the honor to yield to my request that she become my fe."

"Well said!" said the marquis. "You have yet the making of courtier in you, master shepherd. Mademoiselle could have awn a worse prize, after all. And now to be done with the fair as quick as the Church and the devil will allow!"

He struck the table soundly with his sword hilt. The land- rd came, knee-shaking, bringing more candles in the hope anticipating the great lord's whims. "Fetch a priest," said e marquis, "a priest; do you understand? In ten minutes ve a priest here, or——"

The landlord dropped his candles and flew.

The priest came, heavy-eyed and ruffled. He made David ignot and Lucie de Varennes man and wife, pocketed a gold ece that the marquis tossed him, and shuffled out again into e night.

"Wine," ordered the marquis, spreading his ominous fingers the host.

"Fill glasses," he said, when it was brought. He stood up at the head of the table in the candlelight, a black mountain of venom and conceit, with something like the memory of an old love turned to poison in his eye, as it fell upon his niece.

"Monsieur Mignot," he said, raising his wine-glass, "drink after I say this to you: You have taken to be your wife one who will make your life a foul and wretched thing. The blood in her is an inheritance running black lies and red ruin. She will bring you shame and anxiety. The devil that descended to her is there in her eyes and skin and mouth that stoop even to beguile a peasant. There is your promise, monsieur poet, for a happy life. Drink your wine. At last, mademoiselle, I am rid of you."

The marquis drank. A little grievous cry, as if from a sudden wound, came from the girl's lips. David, with his glass in his hand, stepped forward three paces and faced the marquis. There was little of a shepherd in his bearing.

"Just now," he said calmly, "you did me the honor to call me 'monsieur.' May I hope, therefore, that my marriage to mademoiselle has placed me somewhat nearer to you in—let us say, reflected rank—has given me the right to stand more as an equal to monseigneur in a certain little piece of business I have in my mind?"

"You may hope, shepherd," sneered the marquis.

"Then," said David, dashing his glass of wine into the contemptuous eyes that mocked him, "perhaps you will condescend to fight me."

The fury of the great lord outbroke in one sudden curse like a blast from a horn. He tore his sword from its black sheath; he called to the hovering landlord: "A sword there for this lout!" He turned to the lady, with a laugh that chilled her heart, and said: "You put much labor upon me, madame. It seems I must find you a husband and make you a widow in the same night."

Copy 2

'I know not sword-play," said David. He flushed to make
e confession before his lady.

''I know not sword-play,'" mimicked the marquis. "Shall
fight like peasants with oaken cudgels? *Hola!* François, my
tols!"

A postilion brought two shining great pistols ornamented
h carven silver from the carriage holsters. The marquis
sed one upon the table near David's hand. "To the other
d of the table," he cried; "even a shepherd may pull a
gger. Few of them attain the honor to die by the weapon
a De Beaupertuys."

The shepherd and the marquis faced each other from the
ds of the long table. The landlord, in an ague of terror,
tched the air and stammered: "M-M-Monseigneur, for the
e of Christ! not in my house!—do not spill blood—it will
n my custom——" The look of the marquis, threatening
n, paralyzed his tongue.

'Coward," cried the lord of Beaupertuys, "cease chattering
ır teeth long enough to give the word for us, if you can."
Mine host's knees smote the floor. He was without a vo-
ıulary. Even sounds were beyond him. Still, by gestures he
med to beseech peace in the name of his house and
stom.

'I will give the word," said the lady, in a clear voice. She
nt up to David and kissed him sweetly. Her eyes were
ırkling bright, and color had come to her cheek. She stood
ainst the wall, and the two men levelled their pistols for
r count.

'Un—deux—trois!"

The two reports came so nearly together that the candles
kered but once. The marquis stood, smiling, the fingers
his left hand resting, outspread, upon the end of the table.
vid remained erect, and turned his head very slowly,

searching for his wife with his eyes. Then, as a garment fall from where it is hung, he sank, crumpled, upon the floor.

With a little cry of terror and despair, the widowed mai ran and stooped above him. She found his wound, and the looked up with her old look of pale melancholy. "Throug his heart," she whispered. "Oh, his heart!"

"Come," boomed the great voice of the marquis, "out wit you to the carriage! Daybreak shall not find you on my hand Wed you shall be again, and to a living husband, this nigh The next we come upon, my lady, highwayman or peasan If the road yields no other, than the churl that opens m gates. Out with you to the carriage!"

The marquis, implacable and huge, the lady wrapped agai in the mystery of her cloak, the postilion bearing the weapon —all moved out to the waiting carriage. The sound of it ponderous wheels rolling away echoed through the slumbe ing village. In the hall of the Silver Flagon the distracte landlord wrung his hands above the slain poet's body, whil the flames of the four and twenty candles danced and flickere on the table.

The Right Branch

Three leagues, then, the road ran, and turned into a puzzl It joined with another and a larger road at right angles. Davi stood, uncertain, for a while, and then took the road to th right.

Whither it led he knew not, but he was resolved to leav Vernoy far behind that night. He travelled a league and the passed a large château which showed testimony of recent e tertainment. Lights shone from every window; from the gre stone gateway ran a tracery of wheel tracks drawn in the du by the vehicles of the guests.

Three leagues farther and David was weary. He rested ar

t for a while on a bed of pine boughs at the roadside. en up and on again along the unknown way.

Thus for five days he travelled the great road, sleeping upon ure's balsamic beds or in peasants' ricks, eating of their k, hospitable bread, drinking from streams or the willing of the goatherd.

t length he crossed a great bridge and set his foot within smiling city that has crushed or crowned more poets n all the rest of the world. His breath came quickly as Paris g to him in a little undertone her vital chant of greeting—hum of voice and foot and wheel.

High up under the eaves of an old house in the Rue Conti, id paid for lodging, and set himself, in a wooden chair, to poems. The street, once sheltering citizens of import and sequence, was now given over to those who ever follow in wake of decline.

The houses were tall and still possessed of a ruined dignity, many of them were empty save for dust and the spider. night there was the clash of steel and the cries of brawlers ying restlessly from inn to inn. Where once gentility abode now but a rancid and rude incontinence. But here David nd housing commensurate to his scant purse. Daylight and dlelight found him at pen and paper.

One afternoon he was returning from a foraging trip to the er world, with bread and curds and a bottle of thin wine. fway up his dark stairway he met—or rather came upon, she rested on the stair—a young woman of a beauty that uld balk even the justice of a poet's imagination. A loose, cloak, flung open, showed a rich gown beneath. Her eyes nged swiftly with every little shade of thought. Within one nent they would be round and artless like a child's, and and cozening like a gypsy's. One hand raised her gown, raping a little shoe, high-heeled, with its ribbons dan-g, untied. So heavenly she was, so unfitted to stoop, so

qualified to charm and command! Perhaps she had see David coming, and had waited for his help there.

Ah, would monsieur pardon that she occupied the stai way, but the shoe!—the naughty shoe! Alas! it would nc remain tied. Ah! if monsieur *would* be so gracious!

The poet's fingers trembled as he tied the contrary ribbon Then he would have fled from the danger of her presence but the eyes grew long and cozening, like a gypsy's, and hel him. He leaned against the balustrade, clutching his bottle c sour wine.

"You have been so good," she said, smiling. "Does mor sieur, perhaps, live in the house?"

"Yes, madame. I—I think so, madame."

"Perhaps in the third story, then?"

"No, madame; higher up."

The lady fluttered her fingers with the least possible gestur of impatience.

"Pardon. Certainly I am not discreet in asking. Monsieu will forgive me? It is surely not becoming that I should in quire where he lodges."

"Madame, do not say so. I live in the——"

"No, no, no; do not tell me. Now I see that I erred. But cannot lose the interest I feel in this house and all that is i it. Once it was my home. Often I come here but to dream c those happy days again. Will you let that be my excuse?"

"Let me tell you, then, for you need no excuse," stammere the poet. "I live in the top floor—the small room where th stairs turn."

"In the front room?" asked the lady, turning her head sid wise.

"The rear, madame."

The lady sighed, as if with relief.

"I will detain you no longer, then, monsieur," she sai employing the round and artless eye. "Take good care of m

ouse. Alas! only the memories of it are mine now. Adieu, nd accept my thanks for your courtesy."

She was gone, leaving but a smile and a trace of sweet per-ume. David climbed the stairs as one in slumber. But he voke from it, and the smile and the perfume lingered with m and never afterward did either seem quite to leave him. his lady of whom he knew nothing drove him to lyrics of es, chansons of swiftly conceived love, odes to curling hair, nd sonnets to slippers on slender feet.

Poet he must have been, for Yvonne was forgotten; this ne, new loveliness held him with its freshness and grace. The btle perfume about her filled him with strange emotions.

On a certain night three persons were gathered about a ble in a room on the third floor of the same house. Three airs and the table and a lighted candle upon it was all the rniture. One of the persons was a huge man, dressed in ack. His expression was one of sneering pride. The ends of s upturned moustache reached nearly to his mocking eyes. nother was a lady, young and beautiful, with eyes that could e round and artless, like a child's, or long and cozening, like gypsy's, but were now keen and ambitious, like any other nspirator's. The third was a man of action, a combatant, a ld and impatient executive, breathing fire and steel. He was ldressed by the others as Captain Desrolles.

This man struck the table with his fist, and said, with con-olled violence:

"To-night. To-night as he goes to midnight mass. I am ed of the plotting that gets nowhere. I am sick of signals nd ciphers and secret meetings and such *baragouin*. Let us be nest traitors. If France is to be rid of him, let us kill in e open, and not hunt with snares and traps. To-night, I say. back my words. My hand will do the deed. To-night, as he es to mass"

The lady turned upon him a cordial look. Woman, how ever wedded to plots, must ever thus bow to rash courage The big man stroked his upturned moustache.

"Dear captain," he said, in a great voice, softened by habit "this time I agree with you. Nothing is to be gained by wait ing. Enough of the palace guards belong to us to make the endeavor a safe one."

"To-night," repcated Captain Desrolles, again striking the table. "You have heard me, marquis; my hand will do the deed."

"But now," said the huge man, softly, "comes a question Word must be sent to our partisans in the palace, and a signa agreed upon. Our stanchest men must accompany the roya carriage. At this hour what messenger can penetrate so fa as the south doorway? Ribout is stationed there; once a mes sage is placed in his hands, all will go well."

"I will send the message," said the lady.

"You, countess?" said the marquis, raising his eyebrows "Your devotion is great, we know, but——"

"Listen!" exclaimed the lady, rising and resting her hand upon the table; "in a garret of this house lives a youth from the provinces as guileless and tender as the lambs he tended there. I have met him twice or thrice upon the stairs. I ques tioned him, fearing that he might dwell too near the room in which we are accustomed to meet. He is mine, if I will. He writes poems in his garret, and I think he dreams of me. He will do what I say. He shall take the message to the palace."

The marquis rose from his chair and bowed. "You did no permit me to finish my sentence, countess," he said. "I would have said: 'Your devotion is great, but your wit and charm are infinitely greater.'"

While the conspirators were thus engaged, David wa polishing some lines addressed to his *amorette d'escalier*. He heard a timorous knock at his door, and opened it, with

reat throb, to behold her there, panting as one in straits, vith eyes wide open and artless, like a child's.

"Monsieur," she breathed, "I come to you in distress. I be- ieve you to be good and true, and I know of no other help. Iow I flew through the streets among the swaggering men! Monsieur, my mother is dying. My uncle is a captain of uards in the palace of the king. Some one must fly to bring im. May I hope——"

"Mademoiselle," interrupted David, his eyes shining with he desire to do her service, "your hopes shall be my wings. Tell me how I may reach him."

The lady thrust a sealed paper into his hand.

"Go to the south gate—the south gate, mind—and say to he guards there, 'The falcon has left his nest.' They will pass ou, and you will go to the south entrance to the palace. Repeat the words, and give this letter to the man who will eply, 'Let him strike when he will.' This is the password, nonsieur, entrusted to me by my uncle, for now when the ountry is disturbed and men plot against the king's life, no ne without it can gain entrance to the palace grounds after ightfall. If you will, monsieur, take him this letter so that my nother may see him before she closes her eyes."

"Give it me," said David, eagerly. "But shall I let you re- urn home through the streets alone so late? I——"

"No, no—fly. Each moment is like a precious jewel. Some ime," said the lady, with eyes long and cozening, like a ypsy's, "I will try to thank you for your goodness."

The poet thrust the letter into his breast, and bounded own the stairway. The lady, when he was gone, returned o the room below.

The eloquent eyebrows of the marquis interrogated her.

"He is gone," she said, "as fleet and stupid as one of his wn sheep, to deliver it."

The table shook again from the batter of Captain Desrolles's fist.

"Sacred name!" he cried; "I have left my pistols behind! I can trust no others."

"Take this," said the marquis, drawing from beneath his cloak a shining, great weapon, ornamented with carven silver. "There are none truer. But guard it closely, for it bears my arms and crest, and already I am suspected. Me, I must put many leagues between myself and Paris this night. To-morrow must find me in my château. After you, dear countess."

The marquis puffed out the candle. The lady, well cloaked, and the two gentlemen softly descended the stairway and flowed into the crowd that roamed along the narrow pavements of the Rue Conti.

David sped. At the south gate of the king's residence a halberd was laid to his breast, but he turned its point with the words: "The falcon has left his nest."

"Pass, brother," said the guard, "and go quickly."

On the south steps of the palace they moved to seize him, but again the *mot de passe* charmed the watchers. One among them stepped forward and began: "Let him strike——" But a flurry among the guards told of a surprise. A man of keen look and soldierly stride suddenly pressed through them and seized the letter which David held in his hand. "Come with me," he said, and led him inside the great hall. Then he tore open the letter and read it. He beckoned to a man uniformed as an officer of musketeers, who was passing. "Captain Tetreau, you will have the guards at the south entrance and the south gate arrested and confined. Place men known to be loyal in their places." To David he said: "Come with me."

He conducted him through a corridor and an anteroom into a spacious chamber, where a melancholy man, sombrely

dressed, sat brooding in a great leather-covered chair. To that man he said:

"Sire, I have told you that the palace is as full of traitors and spies as a sewer is of rats. You have thought, sire, that it was my fancy. This man penetrated to your very door by their connivance. He bore a letter which I have intercepted. I have brought him here that your majesty may no longer think my zeal excessive."

"I will question him," said the king, stirring in his chair. He looked at David with heavy eyes dulled by an opaque film. The poet bent his knee.

"From where do you come?" asked the king.

"From the village of Vernoy, in the province of Eure-et-Loir, sire."

"What do you follow in Paris?"

"I—I would be a poet, sire."

"What did you in Vernoy?"

"I minded my father's flock of sheep."

The king stirred again, and the film lifted from his eyes.

"Ah! in the fields?"

"Yes, sire."

"You lived in the fields; you went out in the cool of the morning and lay among the hedges in the grass. The flock distributed itself upon the hillside; you drank of the living stream; you ate your sweet brown bread in the shade; and you listened, doubtless, to blackbirds piping in the grove. Is not that so, shepherd?"

"It is, sire," answered David, with a sigh; "and to the bees at the flowers, and, maybe, to the grape gatherers singing on the hill."

"Yes, yes," said the king, impatiently; "maybe to them; but surely to the blackbirds. They whistled often, in the grove, did they not?"

"Nowhere, sire, so sweetly as in Eure-et-Loir. I have en-

deavored to express their song in some verses that I have written."

"Can you repeat those verses?" asked the king, eagerly. "A long time ago I listened to the blackbirds. It would be something better than a kingdom if one could rightly construe their song. And at night you drove the sheep to the fold and then sat, in peace and tranquillity, to your pleasant bread. Can you repeat those verses, shepherd?"

"They run this way, sire," said David, with respectful ardor:

"Lazy shepherd, see your lambkins
Skip, ecstatic, on the mead;
See the firs dance in the breezes,
Hear Pan blowing at his reed.

"Hear us calling from the tree-tops,
See us swoop upon your flock;
Yield us wool to make our nests warm
In the branches of the——"

"If it please your majesty," interrupted a harsh voice, "I will ask a question or two of this rhymester. There is little time to spare. I crave pardon, sire, if my anxiety for your safety offends."

"The loyalty," said the king, "of the Duke d'Aumale is too well proven to give offence." He sank into his chair, and the film came again over his eyes.

"First," said the duke, "I will read you the letter he brought:

"To-night is the anniversary of the dauphin's death. If he goes, as is his custom, to midnight mass to pray for the soul of his son, the falcon will strike, at the corner of the Rue Esplanade. If this be his intention, set a red light in the upper room at the southwest corner of the palace, that the falcon may take heed.

"Peasant," said the duke, sternly, "you have heard these words. Who gave you this message to bring?"

"My lord duke," said David, sincerely, "I will tell you. A lady gave it me. She said her mother was ill, and that this writing would fetch her uncle to her bedside. I do not know the meaning of the letter, but I will swear that she is beautiful and good."

"Describe the woman," commanded the duke, "and how you came to be her dupe."

"Describe her!" said David with a tender smile. "You would command words to perform miracles. Well, she is made of sunshine and deep shade. She is slender, like the alders, and moves with their grace. Her eyes change while you gaze into them; now round, and then half shut as the sun peeps between two clouds. When she comes, heaven is all about her; when she leaves, there is chaos and a scent of hawthorn blossoms. She came to me in the Rue Conti, number twenty-nine."

"It is the house," said the duke, turning to the king, "that we have been watching. Thanks to the poet's tongue, we have a picture of the infamous Countess Quebedaux."

"Sire and my lord duke," said David, earnestly, "I hope my poor words have done no injustice. I have looked into that lady's eyes. I will stake my life that she is an angel, letter or no letter."

The duke looked at him steadily. "I will put you to the proof," he said, slowly. "Dressed as the king, you shall, yourself, attend mass in his carriage at midnight. Do you accept the test?"

David smiled. "I have looked into her eyes," he said. "I had my proof there. Take yours how you will."

Half an hour before twelve the Duke d'Aumale, with his own hands, set a red lamp in a southwest window of the palace. At ten minutes to the hour, David, leaning on his arm, dressed as the king, from top to toe, with his head bowed in his cloak, walked slowly from the royal apartments to the

waiting carriage. The duke assisted him inside and closed the door. The carriage whirled away along its route to the cathedral.

On the *qui vive* in a house at the corner of the Rue Esplanade was Captain Tetreau with twenty men, ready to pounce upon the conspirators when they should appear.

But it seemed that, for some reason, the plotters had slightly altered their plans. When the royal carriage had reached the Rue Christopher, one square nearer than the Rue Esplanade, forth from it burst Captain Desrolles, with his band of would-be regicides, and assailed the equipage. The guards upon the carriage, though surprised at the premature attack, descended and fought valiantly. The noise of conflict attracted the force of Captain Tetreau, and they came pelting down the street to the rescue. But, in the meantime, the desperate Desrolles had torn open the door of the king's carriage, thrust his weapon against the body of the dark figure inside, and fired.

Now, with loyal reinforcements at hand, the street rang with cries and the rasp of steel, but the frightened horses had dashed away. Upon the cushions lay the dead body of the poor mock king and poet, slain by a ball from the pistol of Monseigneur, the Marquis de Beaupertuys.

The Main Road

Three leagues, then, the road ran, and turned into a puzzle. It joined with another and a larger road at right angles. David stood, uncertain, for a while, and then sat himself to rest upon its side.

Whither those roads led he knew not. Either way there seemed to lie a great world full of chance and peril. And then, sitting there, his eye fell upon a bright star, one that he and Yvonne had named for theirs. That set him thinking of

Yvonne, and he wondered if he had not been too hasty. Why should he leave her and his home because a few hot words had come between them? Was love so brittle a thing that jealousy, the very proof of it, could break it? Mornings always brought a cure for the little heartaches of evening. There was yet time for him to return home without any one in the sweetly sleeping village of Vernoy being the wiser. His heart was Yvonne's; there where he had lived always he could write his poems and find his happiness.

David rose, and shook off his unrest and the wild mood that had tempted him. He set his face steadfastly back along the road he had come. By the time he had retravelled the road to Vernoy, his desire to rove was gone. He passed the sheepfold, and the sheep scurried, with a drumming flutter, at his late footsteps, warming his heart by the homely sound. He crept without noise into his little room and lay there, thankful that his feet had escaped the distress of new roads that night.

How well he knew woman's heart! The next evening Yvonne was at the well in the road where the young congregated in order that the *curé* might have business. The corner of her eye was engaged in a search for David, albeit her set mouth seemed unrelenting. He saw the look; braved the mouth, drew from it a recantation and, later, a kiss as they walked homeward together.

Three months afterward they were married. David's father was shrewd and prosperous. He gave them a wedding that was heard of three leagues away. Both the young people were favorites in the village. There was a procession in the streets, a dance on the green; they had the marionettes and a tumbler out from Dreux to delight the guests.

Then a year, and David's father died. The sheep and the cottage descended to him. He already had the seemliest wife in the village. Yvonne's milk pails and her brass kettles were

bright—*ouf!* they blinded you in the sun when you passed that way. But you must keep your eyes upon her yard, for her flower beds were so neat and gay they restored to you your sight. And you might hear her sing, aye, as far as the double chestnut tree above Père Gruneau's blacksmith forge.

But a day came when David drew out paper from a long-shut drawer, and began to bite the end of a pencil. Spring had come again and touched his heart. Poet he must have been, for now Yvonne was well-nigh forgotten. This fine new loveliness of earth held him with its witchery and grace. The perfume from her woods and meadows stirred him strangely. Daily had he gone forth with his flock, and brought it safe at night. But now he stretched himself under the hedge and pieced words together on his bits of paper. The sheep strayed, and the wolves, perceiving that difficult poems make easy mutton, ventured from the woods and stole his lambs.

David's stock of poems grew larger and his flock smaller. Yvonne's nose and temper waxed sharp and her talk blunt. Her pans and kettles grew dull, but her eyes had caught their flash. She pointed out to the poet that his neglect was reducing the flock and bringing woe upon the household. David hired a boy to guard the sheep, locked himself in the little room in the top of the cottage, and wrote more poems. The boy, being a poet by nature, but not furnished with an outlet in the way of writing, spent his time in slumber. The wolves lost no time in discovering that poetry and sleep are practically the same; so the flock steadily grew smaller. Yvonne's ill temper increased at an equal rate. Sometimes she would stand in the yard and rail at David through his high window. Then you could hear her as far as the double chestnut tree above Père Gruneau's blacksmith forge.

M. Papineau, the kind, wise, meddling old notary, saw this, as he saw everything at which his nose pointed. He went to David, fortified himself with a great pinch of snuff, and said:

"Friend Mignot, I affixed the seal upon the marriage certificate of your father. It would distress me to be obliged to attest a paper signifying the bankruptcy of his son. But that is what you are coming to. I speak as an old friend. Now, listen to what I have to say. You have your heart set, I perceive, upon poetry. At Dreux, I have a friend, one Monsieur Bril—Georges Bril. He lives in a little cleared space in a houseful of books. He is a learned man; he visits Paris each year; he himself has written books. He will tell you when the catacombs were made, how they found out the names of the stars, and why the plover has a long bill. The meaning and the form of poetry is to him as intelligent as the baa of a sheep is to you. I will give you a letter to him, and you shall take him your poems and let him read them. Then you will know if you shall write more, or give your attention to your wife and business."

"Write the letter," said David. "I am sorry you did not speak of this sooner."

At sunrise the next morning he was on the road to Dreux with the precious roll of poems under his arm. At noon he wiped the dust from his feet at the door of Monsieur Bril. That learned man broke the seal of M. Papineau's letter, and sucked up its contents through his gleaming spectacles as the sun draws water. He took David inside to his study and sat him down upon a little island beat upon by a sea of books.

Monsieur Bril had a conscience. He flinched not even at a mass of manuscript the thickness of a finger length and rolled to an incorrigible curve. He broke the back of the roll against his knee and began to read. He slighted nothing; he bored into the lump as a worm into a nut, seeking for a kernel.

Meanwhile, David sat, marooned, trembling in the spray of so much literature. It roared in his ears. He held no chart or compass for voyaging in that sea. Half the world, he thought, must be writing books.

Monsieur Bril bored to the last page of the poems. Then he took off his spectacles and wiped them with his handkerchief.

"My old friend, Papineau, is well?" he asked.

"In the best of health," said David.

"How many sheep have you, Monsieur Mignot?"

"Three hundred and nine, when I counted them yesterday. The flock has had ill fortune. To that number it has decreased from eight hundred and fifty."

"You have a wife and a home, and lived in comfort. The sheep brought you plenty. You went into the fields with them and lived in the keen air and ate the sweet bread of contentment. You had but to be vigilant and recline there upon nature's breast, listening to the whistle of the blackbirds in the grove. Am I right thus far?"

"It was so," said David.

"I have read all your verses," continued Monsieur Bril, his eyes wandering about his sea of books as if he conned the horizon for a sail. "Look yonder, through that window, Monsieur Mignot; tell me what you see in that tree."

"I see a crow," said David, looking.

"There is a bird," said Monsieur Bril, "that shall assist me where I am disposed to shirk a duty. You know that bird, Monsieur Mignot; he is the philosopher of the air. He is happy through submission to his lot. None so merry or full-crawed as he with his whimsical eye and rollicking step. The fields yield him what he desires. He never grieves that his plumage is not gay, like the oriole's. And you have heard, Monsieur Mignot, the notes that nature has given him? Is the nightingale any happier, do you think?"

David rose to his feet. The crow cawed harshly from his tree.

"I thank you, Monsieur Bril," he said, slowly. "There was not, then, one nightingale note among all those croaks?"

"I could not have missed it," said Monsieur Bril, with a

sigh. "I read every word. Live your poetry, man; do not try to write it any more."

"I thank you," said David, again. "And now I will be going back to my sheep."

"If you would dine with me," said the man of books, "and overlook the smart of it, I will give you reasons at length."

"No," said the poet, "I must be back in the fields cawing at my sheep."

Back along the road to Vernoy he trudged with his poems under his arm. When he reached his village he turned into the shop of one Zeigler, a Jew out of Armenia, who sold anything that came to his hand.

"Friend," said David, "wolves from the forest harass my sheep on the hills. I must purchase firearms to protect them. What have you?"

"A bad day, this, for me, friend Mignot," said Zeigler, spreading his hands, "for I perceive that I must sell you a weapon that will not fetch a tenth of its value. Only last week I bought from a peddler a wagon full of goods that he procured at a sale by a *commissionaire* of the crown. The sale was of the château and belongings of a great lord—I know not his title—who has been banished for conspiracy against the king. There are some choice firearms in the lot. This pistol —oh, a weapon fit for a prince!—it shall be only forty francs to you, friend Mignot—if I lost ten by the sale. But perhaps an arquebus——"

"This will do," said David, throwing the money on the counter. "Is it charged?"

"I will charge it," said Zeigler. "And, for ten francs more, add a store of powder and ball."

David laid his pistol under his coat and walked to his cottage. Yvonne was not there. Of late she had taken to gadding much among the neighbors. But a fire was glowing in the kitchen stove. David opened the door of it and thrust his

poems in upon the coals. As they blazed up they made a singing, harsh sound in the flue.

"The song of the crow!" said the poet.

He went up to his attic room and closed the door. So quiet was the village that a score of people heard the roar of the great pistol. They flocked thither, and up the stairs where the smoke, issuing, drew their notice.

The men laid the body of the poet upon his bed, awkwardly arranging it to conceal the torn plumage of the poor black crow. The women chattered in a luxury of zealous pity. Some of them ran to tell Yvonne.

M. Papineau, whose nose had brought him there among the first, picked up the weapon and ran his eye over its silver mountings with a mingled air of connoisseurship and grief.

"The arms," he explained, aside, to the *curé*, "and crest of Monseigneur, the Marquis de Beaupertuys."

The Enchanted Profile

THERE are few Caliphesses. Women are Scheherazades by birth, predilection, instinct, and arrangement of the vocal cords. The thousand and one stories are being told every day by hundreds of thousands of viziers' daughters to their respective sultans. But the bow-string will get some of 'em yet if they don't watch out.

I heard a story, though, of one Lady Caliph. It isn't precisely an Arabian Nights story, because it brings in Cinderella, who flourished her dishrag in another epoch and country. So, if you don't mind the mixed dates (which seem to give it an Eastern flavor, after all), we'll get along.

In New York there is an old, old hotel. You have seen

woodcuts of it in the magazines. It was built—let's see—at a time when there was nothing above Fourteenth Street except the old Indian trail to Boston and Hammerstein's office. Soon the old hostelry will be torn down. And, as the stout walls are riven apart and the bricks go roaring down the chutes, crowds of citizens will gather at the nearest corners and weep over the destruction of a dear old landmark. Civic pride is strong in New Bagdad; and the wettest weeper and the loudest howler against the iconoclasts will be the man (originally from Terre Haute) whose fond memories of the old hotel are limited to his having been kicked out from its free-lunch counter in 1873.

At this hotel always stopped Mrs. Maggie Brown. Mrs. Brown was a bony woman of sixty, dressed in the rustiest black, and carrying a handbag made, apparently, from the hide of the original animal that Adam decided to call an alligator. She always occupied a small parlor and bedroom at the top of the hotel at a rental of two dollars per day. And always, while she was there, each day came hurrying to see her many men, sharp-faced, anxious-looking, with only seconds to spare. For Maggie Brown was said to be the third richest woman in the world; and these solicitous gentlemen were only the city's wealthiest brokers and business men seeking trifling loans of half a dozen millions or so from the dingy old lady with the prehistoric handbag.

The stenographer and typewriter of the Acropolis Hotel (there! I've let the name of it out!) was Miss Ida Bates. She was a holdover from the Greek classics. There wasn't a flaw in her looks. Some old-timer in paying his regards to a lady said: "To have loved her was a liberal education." Well, even to have looked over the black hair and neat white shirtwaist of Miss Bates was equal to a full course in any correspondence school in the country. She sometimes did a little typewriting for me and, as she refused to take the money in

advance, she came to look upon me as something of a friend and protégé. She had unfailing kindliness and good nature; and not even a whitelead drummer or a fur importer had ever dared to cross the dead line of good behavior in her presence. The entire force of the Acropolis, from the owner, who lived in Vienna, down to the head porter, who had been bedridden for sixteen years, would have sprung to her defence in a moment.

One day I walked past Miss Bates's little sanctum Remingtorium, and saw in her place a black-haired unit—unmistakably a person—pounding with each of her forefingers upon the keys. Musing on the mutability of temporal affairs, I passed on. The next day I went on a two weeks' vacation. Returning, I strolled through the lobby of the Acropolis, and saw, with a little warm glow of auld lang syne, Miss Bates, as Grecian and kind and flawless as ever, just putting the cover on her machine. The hour for closing had come; but she asked me in to sit for a few minutes in the dictation chair. Miss Bates explained her absence and return to the Acropolis Hotel in words identical with or similar to these following:

"Well, Man, how are the stories coming?"

"Pretty regularly," said I. "About equal to their going."

"I'm sorry," said she. "Good typewriting is the main thing in a story. You've missed me, haven't you?"

"No one," said I, "whom I have ever known knows as well as you do how to space properly belt buckles, semicolons, hotel guests, and hairpins. But you've been away, too. I saw a package of peppermint-pepsin in your place the other day."

"I was going to tell you about it," said Miss Bates, "if you hadn't interrupted me.

"Of course, you know about Maggie Brown, who stops here. Well, she's worth $40,000,000. She lives in Jersey in a ten-dollar flat. She's always got more cash on hand than half a dozen business candidates for vice-president. I don't know

whether she carries it in her stocking or not, but I know she's mighty popular down in the part of the town where they worship the golden calf.

"Well, about two weeks ago, Mrs. Brown stops at the door and rubbers at me for ten minutes. I'm sitting with my side to her, striking off some manifold copies of a copper-mine proposition for a nice old man from Tonopah. But I always see everything all around me. When I'm hard at work I can see things through my side-combs; and I can leave one button unbuttoned in the back of my shirtwaist and see who's behind me. I didn't look around, because I make from eighteen to twenty dollars a week, and I didn't have to.

"That evening at knocking-off time she sends for me to come up to her apartment. I expected to have to typewrite about two thousand words of notes-of-hand, liens, and contracts, with a ten-cent tip in sight; but I went. Well, Man, I was certainly surprised. Old Maggie Brown had turned human.

" 'Child,' says she, 'you're the most beautiful creature I ever saw in my life. I want you to quit your work and come and live with me. I've no kith or kin,' says she, 'except a husband and a son or two, and I hold no communication with any of 'em. They're extravagant burdens on a hard-working woman. I want you to be a daughter to me. They say I'm stingy and mean, and the papers print lies about my doing my own cooking and washing. It's a lie,' she goes on. 'I put my washing out, except the handkerchiefs and stockings and petticoats and collars, and light stuff like that. I've got forty million dollars in cash and stocks and bonds that are as negotiable as Standard Oil, preferred, at a church fair. I'm a lonely old woman and I need companionship. You're the most beautiful human being I ever saw,' says she. 'Will you come and live with me? I'll show 'em whether I can spend money or not,' she says.

"Well, Man, what would you have done? Of course, I fell to it. And, to tell you the truth, I began to like old Maggie. It wasn't all on account of the forty millions and what she could do for me. I was kind of lonesome in the world, too. Everybody's got to have somebody they can explain to about the pain in their left shoulder and how fast patent-leather shoes wear out when they begin to crack. And you can't talk about such things to men you meet in hotels—they're looking for just such openings.

"So I gave up my job in the hotel and went with Mrs. Brown. I certainly seemed to have a mash on her. She'd look at me for half an hour at a time when I was sitting, reading, or looking at the magazines.

"One time I says to her: 'Do I remind you of some deceased relative or friend of your childhood, Mrs. Brown? I've noticed you give me a pretty good optical inspection from time to time.'

"'You have a face,' she says, 'exactly like a dear friend of mine—the best friend I ever had. But I like you for yourself, child, too,' she says.

"And say, Man, what do you suppose she did? Loosened up like a Marcel wave in the surf at Coney. She took me to a swell dressmaker and gave her *à la carte* to fit me out—money no object. They were rush orders, and madame locked the front door and put the whole force to work.

"Then we moved to—where do you think?—no; guess again—that's right—the Hotel Bonton. We had a six-room apartment; and it cost $100 a day. I saw the bill. I began to love that old lady.

"And then, Man, when my dresses began to come in—oh, I won't tell you about 'em! you couldn't understand. And I began to call her Aunt Maggie. You've read about Cinderella, of course. Well, what Cinderella said when the prince fitted

hat 3½ A on her foot was a hard-luck story compared to the hings I told myself.

"Then Aunt Maggie says she is going to give me a coming-ut banquet in the Bonton that'll make moving Vans of all he old Dutch families on Fifth Avenue.

" 'I've been out before, Aunt Maggie,' says I. 'But I'll come ut again. But you know,' says I, 'that this is one of the swell-st hotels in the city. And you know—pardon me—that it's ard to get a bunch of notables together unless you've trained or it.'

" 'Don't fret about that, child,' says Aunt Maggie. 'I don't end out invitations—I issue orders. I'll have fifty guests here hat couldn't be brought together again at any reception un-ess it were given by King Edward or William Travers Jerome. They are men, of course, and all of 'em either owe me money r intend to. Some of their wives won't come, but a good nany will.'

"Well, I wish you could have been at that banquet. The linner service was all gold and cut glass. There were about orty men and ladies present besides Aunt Maggie and I. You'd never have known the third richest woman in the vorld. She had on a new black silk dress with so much passe-nenterie on it that it sounded exactly like a hailstorm I heard nce when I was staying all night with a girl that lived on a op-floor studio.

"And my dress!—say, Man, I can't waste the words on you. t was all hand-made lace—where there was any of it at all—nd it cost $300. I saw the bill. The men were all baldheaded r white-side-whiskered, and they kept up a running fire of ght repartee about 3-per cents, and Bryan and the cotton rop.

"On the left of me was something that talked like a banker, nd on my right was a young fellow who said he was a news-aper artist. He was the only—well, I was going to tell you.

"After the dinner was over Mrs. Brown and I went up to the apartment. We had to squeeze our way through a mob of reporters all the way through the halls. That's one of the things money does for you. Say, do you happen to know a newspaper artist named Lathrop—a tall man with nice eyes and an easy way of talking? No, I don't remember what paper he works on. Well, all right.

"When we got upstairs Mrs. Brown telephones for the bill right away. It came, and it was $600. I saw the bill. Aunt Maggie fainted. I got her on a lounge and opened the beadwork.

"'Child,' says she, when she got back to the world, 'what was it? A raise of rent or an income-tax?'

"'Just a little dinner,' says I. 'Nothing to worry about—hardly a drop in the bucket-shop. Sit up and take notice—a dispossess notice, if there's no other kind.'

"But, say, Man, do you know what Aunt Maggie did? She got cold feet! She hustled me out of that Hotel Bonton at nine the next morning. We went to a rooming-house on the lower West Side. She rented one room that had water on the floor below and light on the floor above. After we got moved all you could see in the room was about $1,500 worth of new swell dresses and a one-burner gas-stove.

"Aunt Maggie had had a sudden attack of the hedges. I guess everybody has got to go on a spree once in their life. A man spends his on highballs, and a woman gets woozy on clothes. But with forty million dollars—say! I'd like to have a picture of—but, speaking of pictures, did you ever run across a newspaper artist named Lathrop—a tall—oh, I asked you that before, didn't I? He was mighty nice to me at the dinner. His voice just suited me. I guess he must have thought I was to inherit some of Aunt Maggie's money.

"Well, Mr. Man, three days of that light-housekeeping was plenty for me. Aunt Maggie was affectionate as ever. She'd

ardly let me get out of her sight. But let me tell you. She as a hedger from Hedgersville, Hedger County. Seventy-five nts a day was the limit she set. We cooked our own meals the room. There I was, with a thousand dollars' worth of e latest things in clothes, doing stunts over a one-burner s-stove.

"As I say, on the third day I flew the coop. I couldn't stand r throwing together a fifteen-cent kidney stew while wear-g, at the same time, a $150 house-dress, with Valenciennes ce insertion. So I goes into the closet and puts on the cheap-t dress Mrs. Brown had bought for me—it's the one I've got n now—not so bad for $75, is it? I'd left all my own clothes my sister's flat in Brooklyn.

"'Mrs. Brown, formerly "Aunt Maggie,"' says I to her, 'I n going to extend my feet alternately, one after the other, such a manner and direction that this tenement will recede om me in the quickest possible time. I am no worshipper of oney,' says I, 'but there are some things I can't stand. I can and the fabulous monster that I've read about that blows ot birds and cold bottles with the same breath. But I can't and a quitter,' says I. 'They say you've got forty million llars—well, you'll never have any less. And I was beginning like you, too,' says I.

"Well, the late Aunt Maggie kicks till the tears flow. She fers to move into a swell room with a two-burner stove and nning water.

"'I've spent an awful lot of money, child,' says she. 'We'll ve to economize for a while. You're the most beautiful eature I ever laid eyes on,' she says, 'and I don't want you leave me.'

"Well, you see me, don't you? I walked straight to the cropolis and asked for my job back, and I got it. How did u say your writings were getting along? I know you've lost t some by not having me to typewrite 'em. Do you ever

have 'em illustrated? And, by the way, did you ever happe to know a newspaper artist—oh, shut up! I know I asked yo before. I wonder what paper he works on? It's funny, but couldn't help thinking that he wasn't thinking about th money he might have been thinking I was thinking I'd ge from old Maggie Brown. If I only knew some of the new paper editors I'd——"

The sound of an easy footstep came from the doorway. Id Bates saw who it was with her back-hair comb. I saw her tur pink, perfect statue that she was—a miracle that I share wit Pygmalion only.

"Am I excusable?" she said to me—adorable petitioner tha she became. "It's—it's Mr. Lathrop. I wonder if it reall wasn't the money—I wonder, if after all, he——"

Of course, I was invited to the wedding. After the cer mony I dragged Lathrop aside.

"You an artist," said I, "and haven't figured out why Ma gie Brown conceived such a strong liking for Miss Bates—tha was? Let me show you."

The bride wore a simple white dress as beautifully drape as the costumes of the ancient Greeks. I took some leav from one of the decorative wreaths in the little parlor, an made a chaplet of them, and placed them on née Bates's shi ing chestnut hair, and made her turn her profile to h husband.

"By jingo!" said he. "Isn't Ida's head a dead ringer for th lady's head on the silver dollar?"

The Passing of Black Eagle

For some months of a certain year a grim bandit infeste the Texas border along the Rio Grande. Peculiarly striki

the optic nerve was this notorious marauder. His persony secured him the title of "Black Eagle, the Terror of the rder." Many fearsome tales are on record concerning the ngs of him and his followers. Suddenly, in the space of a gle minute, Black Eagle vanished from earth. He was never ird of again. His own band never even guessed the mystery his disappearance. The border ranches and settlements red he would come again to ride and ravage the mesquite s. He never will. It is to disclose the fate of Black Eagle t this narrative is written.

The initial movement of the story is furnished by the foot a bartender in St. Louis. His discerning eye fell upon the m of Chicken Ruggles as he pecked with avidity at the free ch. Chicken was a "hobo." He had a long nose like the of a fowl, an inordinate appetite for poultry, and a habit gratifying it without expense, which accounts for the name en him by his fellow vagrants.

Physicians agree that the partaking of liquids at meal times ot a healthy practice. The hygiene of the saloon promules the opposite. Chicken had neglected to purchase a drink accompany his meal. The bartender rounded the counter, ght the injudicious diner by the ear with a lemon squeezer, him to the door and kicked him into the street.

Thus the mind of Chicken was brought to realize the signs coming winter. The night was cold; the stars shone with kindly brilliancy; people were hurrying along the streets in egotistic, jostling streams. Men had donned their overts, and Chicken knew to an exact percentage the increased iculty of coaxing dimes from those buttoned-in vest pock- The time had come for his annual exodus to the South. A little boy, five or six years old, stood looking with covet- eyes in a confectioner's window. In one small hand he d an empty two-ounce vial; in the other he grasped tightly nething flat and round, with a shining milled edge. The

scene presented a field of operations commensurate to Chicl en's talents and daring. After sweeping the horizon to mak sure that no official tug was cruising near, he insidiousl accosted his prey. The boy, having been early taught by h household to regard altruistic advances with extreme susp cion, received the overtures coldly.

Then Chicken knew that he must make one of those de perate, nerve-shattering plunges into speculation that fortun sometimes requires of those who would win her favor. Fiv cents was his capital, and this he must risk against the chanc of winning what lay within the close grasp of the youngster chubby hand. It was a fearful lottery, Chicken knew. But h must accomplish his end by strategy, since he had a whol some terror of plundering infants by force. Once, in a par driven by hunger, he had committed an onslaught upon a bo tle of peptonized infant's food in the possession of an occu pant of a baby carriage. The outraged infant had so prompt opened its mouth and pressed the button that communicate with the welkin that help arrived, and Chicken did his thirt days in a snug coop. Wherefore he was, as he said, "leary c kids."

Beginning artfully to question the boy concerning h choice of sweets, he gradually drew out the information h wanted. Mamma said he was to ask the drug-store man fo ten cents' worth of paregoric in the bottle; he was to keep h hand shut tight over the dollar; he must not stop to talk t any one in the street; he must ask the drug-store man to wra up the change and put it in the pocket of his trousers. Indee they had pockets—two of them! And he liked chocola creams best.

Chicken went into the store and turned plunger. He i vested his entire capital in C. A. N. D. Y. stocks, simply pave the way to the greater risk following.

He gave the sweets to the youngster, and had the satisfa

on of perceiving that confidence was established. After that was easy to obtain leadership of the expedition, to take the vestment by the hand and lead it to a nice drug store he iew of in the same block. There Chicken, with a parental , passed over the dollar and called for the medicine, while e boy crunched his candy, glad to be relieved of the re- onsibility of the purchase. And then the successful investor, arching his pockets, found an overcoat button—the extent his winter trousseau—and, wrapping it carefully, placed the tensible change in the pocket of confiding juvenility. Set- ng the youngster's face homeward, and patting him benevo- ntly on the back—for Chicken's heart was as soft as those his feathered namesakes—the speculator quit the market th a profit of 1,700 per cent. on his invested capital.

Two hours later an Iron Mountain freight engine pulled t of the railroad yards, Texas bound, with a string of emp- s. In one of the cattle cars, half buried in excelsior, Chicken at ease. Beside him in his nest was a quart bottle of very or whisky and a paper bag of bread and cheese. Mr. Rug- es, in his private car, was on his trip south for the winter ason.

For a week that car was trundled southward, shifted, laid er, and manipulated after the manner of rolling stock, but hicken stuck to it, leaving it only at necessary times to sat- y his hunger and thirst. He knew it must go down to the ttle country, and San Antonio, in the heart of it, was his al. There the air was salubrious and mild; the people in- lgent and long-suffering. The bartenders there would not k him. If he should eat too long or too often at one place ey would swear at him as if by rote and without heat. They ore so drawlingly, and they rarely paused short of their full cabulary, which was copious, so that Chicken had often lped a good meal during the process of the vituperative hibition. The season there was always spring-like; the

plazas were pleasant at night, with music and gayety: excep during the slight and infrequent cold snaps one could slee comfortably out of doors in case the interiors should develo inhospitality.

At Texarkana his car was switched to the I. and G. N Then still southward it trailed until, at length, it crawle across the Colorado bridge at Austin, and lined out, straigh as an arrow, for the run to San Antonio.

When the freight halted at that town Chicken was fas asleep. In ten minutes the train was off again for Laredo, th end of the road. Those empty cattle cars were for distributio along the line at points from which the ranches shipped thei stock.

When Chicken awoke his car was stationary. Looking ou between the slats, he saw it was a bright, moonlit night Scrambling out, he saw his car with three others abandone on a little siding in a wild and lonesome country. A cattl pen and chute stood on one side of the track. The railroa bisected a vast, dim ocean of prairie, in the midst of whic Chicken, with his futile rolling stock, was as completel stranded as was Robinson with his land-locked boat.

A white post stood near the rails. Going up to it, Chicke read the letters at the top, S. A. 90. Laredo was nearly as fa to the south. He was almost a hundred miles from any tow Coyotes began to yelp in the mysterious sea around hi Chicken felt lonesome. He had lived in Boston without a education, in Chicago without nerve, in Philadelphia witho a sleeping place, in New York without a pull, and in Pitt burgh sober, and yet he had never felt so lonely as now.

Suddenly through the intense silence, he heard the whicke of a horse. The sound came from the side of the track towar the east, and Chicken began to explore timorously in that d rection. He stepped high along the mat of curly mesquit grass, for he was afraid of everything there might be in th

lderness—snakes, rats, brigands, centipedes, mirages, cow-
ys, fandangoes, tarantulas, tamales—he had read of them in
e story papers. Rounding a clump of prickly pear that reared
gh its fantastic and menacing array of rounded heads, he
s struck to shivering terror by a snort and a thunderous
unge, as the horse, himself startled, bounded away some
ty yards, and then resumed his grazing. But here was the
e thing in the desert that Chicken did not fear. He had
en reared on a farm; he had handled horses, understood
em, and could ride.

Approaching slowly and speaking soothingly, he followed
e animal, which, after its first flight, seemed gentle enough,
d secured the end of the twenty-foot lariat that dragged
er him in the grass. It required him but a few moments to
ntrive the rope into an ingenious nose-bridle, after the style
the Mexican *borsal*. In another he was upon the horse's
ck and off at a splendid lope, giving the animal free choice
direction. "He will take me somewhere," said Chicken to
mself.

It would have been a thing of joy, that untrammelled gal-
over the moonlit prairie, even to Chicken, who loathed
ertion, but that his mood was not for it. His head ached;
growing thirst was upon him; the "somewhere" whither his
ky mount might convey him was full of dismal perad-
nture.

And now he noted that the horse moved to a definite goal.
here the prairie lay smooth he kept his course straight as
arrow's toward the east. Deflected by hill or arroyo or im-
acticable spinous brakes, he quickly flowed again into the
rrent, charted by his unerring instinct. At last, upon the
le of a gentle rise, he suddenly subsided to a complacent
lk. A stone's cast away stood a little mott of coma trees;
neath it a *jacal* such as the Mexicans erect—a one-room
use of upright poles daubed with clay and roofed with

grass or tule reeds. An experienced eye would have estimated the spot as the headquarters of a small sheep ranch. In the moonlight the ground in the nearby corral showed pulverized to a level smoothness by the hoofs of the sheep. Everywhere was carelessly distributed the paraphernalia of the place—ropes, bridles, saddles, sheep pelts, wool sacks, feed troughs and camp litter. The barrel of drinking water stood in the end of the two-horse wagon near the door. The harness was piled, promiscuous, upon the wagon tongue, soaking up the dew.

Chicken slipped to earth, and tied the horse to a tree. He halloed again and again, but the house remained quiet. The door stood open, and he entered cautiously. The light was sufficient for him to see that no one was at home. He struck a match and lighted a lamp that stood on a table. The room was that of a bachelor ranchman who was content with the necessaries of life. Chicken rummaged intelligently until he found what he had hardly dared hope for—a small brown jug that still contained something near a quart of his desire.

Half an hour later, Chicken—now a gamecock of hostile aspect—emerged from the house with unsteady steps. He had drawn upon the absent ranchman's equipment to replace his own ragged attire. He wore a suit of coarse brown ducking, the coat being a sort of rakish bolero, jaunty to a degree. Boots he had donned, and spurs that whirred with every lurching step. Buckled around him was a belt full of cartridges with a big six-shooter in each of its two holsters.

Prowling about, he found blankets, a saddle and bridle with which he caparisoned his steed. Again mounting, he rode swiftly away, singing a loud and tuneless song.

Bud King's band of desperadoes, outlaws and horse and cattle thieves were in camp at a secluded spot on the bank of the Frio. Their depredations in the Rio Grande country, while no bolder than usual, had been advertised more exten-

ely, and Captain Kinney's company of rangers had been lered down to look after them. Consequently, Bud King, o was a wise general, instead of cutting out a hot trail for e upholders of the law, as his men wished to do, retired for e time to the prickly fastnesses of the Frio valley.

Though the move was a prudent one, and not incompatible h Bud's well-known courage, it raised dissension among the mbers of the band. In fact, while they thus lay ingloriously *du* in the brush, the question of Bud King's fitness for the dership was argued, with closed doors, as it were, by his lowers. Never before had Bud's skill or efficiency been ught to criticism; but his glory was waning (and such is ry's fate) in the light of a newer star. The sentiment of e band was crystallizing into the opinion that Black Eagle ıld lead them with more luster, profit, and distinction.

This Black Eagle—sub-titled the "Terror of the Border"— d been a member of the gang about three months.

One night while they were in camp on the San Miguel ter-hole a solitary horseman on the regulation fiery steed shed in among them. The newcomer was of a portentous d devastating aspect. A beak-like nose with a predatory ve projected above a mass of bristling, blue-black whiskers. s eye was cavernous and fierce. He was spurred, sombre- d, booted, garnished with revolvers, abundantly drunk, and y much unafraid. Few people in the country drained by the o Bravo would have cared thus to invade alone the camp Bud King. But this fell bird swooped fearlessly upon them d demanded to be fed.

Hospitality in the prairie country is not limited. Even if ır enemy pass your way you must feed him before you shoot n. You must empty your larder into him before you empty ır lead. So the stranger of undeclared intentions was set wn to a mighty feast.

A talkative bird he was, full of most marvellous loud tales

and exploits, and speaking a language at times obscure b never colorless. He was a new sensation to Bud King's me who rarely encountered new types. They hung, delighte upon his vainglorious boasting, the spicy strangeness of h lingo, his contemptuous familiarity with life, the world, a remote places, and the extravagant frankness with which h conveyed his sentiments.

To their guest the band of outlaws seemed to be nothi more than a congregation of country bumpkins whom he w "stringing for grub" just as he would have told his stories the back door of a farmhouse to wheedle a meal. And, i deed, his ignorance was not without excuse, for the "b man" of the Southwest does not run to extremes. Tho brigands might justly have been taken for a little party peaceable rustics assembled for a fish-fry or pecan gatherin Gentle of manner, slouching of gait, soft-voiced, unp turesquely clothed; not one of them presented to the eye a witness of the desperate records they had earned.

For two days the glittering stranger within the camp w feasted. Then, by common consent, he was invited to becor a member of the band. He consented, presenting for enro ment the prodigious name of "Captain Montressor." This w immediately overruled by the band, and "Piggy" substitut as a compliment to the awful and insatiate appetite of owner.

Thus did the Texas border receive the most spectacul brigand that ever rode its chaparral.

For the next three months Bud King conducted busin as usual, escaping encounters with law officers and being co tent with reasonable profits. The band ran off some very go companies of horses from the ranges, and a few bunches fine cattle which they got safely across the Rio Grande a disposed of to fair advantage. Often the band would ride in the little villages and Mexican settlements, terrorizing the

itants and plundering for the provisions and ammunition
y needed. It was during these bloodless raids that Piggy's
cious aspect and frightful voice gained him a renown
re widespread and glorious than those other gentle-voiced
sad-faced desperadoes could have acquired in a lifetime.
The Mexicans, most apt in nomenclature, first called him
e Black Eagle, and used to frighten the babes by threaten-
them with tales of the dreadful robber who carried off
e children in his great beak. Soon the name extended, and
ck Eagle, the Terror of the Border, became a recognized
or in exaggerated newspaper reports and ranch gossip.
The country from the Nueces to the Rio Grande was a wild
fertile stretch, given over to the sheep and cattle ranches.
age was free; the inhabitants were few; the law was mainly
tter, and the pirates met with little opposition until the
nting and garish Piggy gave the band undue advertise-
nt. Then Kinney's ranger company headed for those pre-
cts, and Bud King knew that it meant grim and sudden
or else temporary retirement. Regarding the risk to be
ecessary, he drew off his band to an almost inaccessible
t on the bank of the Frio. Wherefore, as has been said,
atisfaction arose among the members, and impeachment
ceedings against Bud were premeditated, with Black Eagle
igh favor for the succession. Bud King was not unaware of
sentiment, and he called aside Cactus Taylor, his trusted
tenant, to discuss it.

If the boys," said Bud, "ain't satisfied with me, I'm willin'
tep out. They're buckin' against my way of handlin' 'em.
I 'specially because I concludes to hit the brush while Sam
ney is ridin' the line. I saves 'em from bein' shot or sent
on a state contract, and they up and says I'm no good."

It ain't so much that," explained Cactus, "as it is they're
n locoed about Piggy. They want them whiskers and that
e of his to split the wind at the head of the column."

"There's somethin' mighty seldom about Piggy," declare Bud, musingly. "I never yet see anything on the hoof th he exactly grades up with. He can shore holler a plenty, and l straddles a hoss from where you laid the chunk. But he ain never been smoked yet. You know, Cactus, we ain't had a ro since he's been with us. Piggy's all right for skearin' the greas kids and layin' waste a cross-roads store. I reckon he's th finest canned oyster buccaneer and cheese pirate that ev was, but how's his appetite for fightin'? I've knowed son citizens you'd think was starvin' for trouble get a bad case dyspepsy the first dose of lead they had to take."

"He talks all spraddled out," said Cactus, "'bout th rookuses he's been in. He claims to have saw the elepha and hearn the owl."

"I know," replied Bud, using the cow-puncher's expressi phrase of skepticism, "but it sounds to me!"

This conversation was held one night in camp while th other members of the band—eight in number—were spray ing around the fire, lingering over their supper. When Bu and Cactus ceased talking they heard Piggy's formidab voice holding forth to the others as usual while he was e gaged in checking, though never satisfying, his raveni appetite.

"Wat's de use," he was saying, "of chasin' little red cows and hosses 'round for t'ousands of miles? Dere ain't nutti in it. Gallopin' t'rough dese bushes and briers, and gettin' t'irst dat a brewery couldn't put out, and missin' meals! Sa You know what I'd do if I was main finger of dis bunch? I stick up a train. I'd blow de express car and make hard dolla where you guys get wind. Youse makes me tired. Dis soc cow kind of cheap sport gives me a pain."

Later on, a deputation waited on Bud. They stood on o leg, chewed mesquite twigs and circumlocuted, for they hat to hurt his feelings. Bud foresaw their business, and made

sy for them. Bigger risks and larger profits were what they anted.

The suggestion of Piggy's about holding up a train had ed their imagination and increased their admiration for the sh and boldness of the instigator. They were such simple, tless, and custom-bound bush-rangers that they had never efore thought of extending their habits beyond the running f of live-stock and the shooting of such of their acquaintces as ventured to interfere.

Bud acted "on the level," agreeing to take a subordinate ace in the gang until Black Eagle should have been given trial as leader.

After a great deal of consultation, studying of time-tables d discussion of the country's topography, the time and place r carrying out their new enterprise was decided upon. At at time there was a feedstuff famine in Mexico and a cattle mine in certain parts of the United States, and there was a isk international trade. Much money was being shipped ong the railroads that connected the two republics. It was reed that the most promising place for the contemplated bbery was at Espina, a little station on the I. and G. N., out forty miles north of Laredo. The train stopped there e minute; the country around was wild and unsettled; the tion consisted of but one house in which the agent lived. Black Eagle's band set out, riding by night. Arriving in the cinity of Espina, they rested their horses all day in a thicket few miles distant.

The train was due at Espina at 10:30 P.M. They could rob e train and be well over the Mexican border with their oty by daylight the next morning.

To do Black Eagle justice, he exhibited no signs of flinchg from the responsible honors that had been conferred upon m.

He assigned his men to their respective posts with discre-

tion, and coached them carefully as to their duties. On eac
side of the track four of the band were to lie concealed in th
chaparral. Gotch-Ear Rodgers was to stick up the statio
agent. Bronco Charlie was to remain with the horses, holdin
them in readiness. At a spot where it was calculated the en
gine would be when the train stopped, Bud King was to li
hidden on one side, and Black Eagle himself on the othe
The two would get the drop on the engineer and fireman
force them to descend and proceed to the rear. Then th
express car would be looted, and the escape made. No on
was to move until Black Eagle gave the signal by firing hi
revolver. The plan was perfect.

At ten minutes to train time every man was at his pos
effectually concealed by the thick chaparral that grew almos
to the rails. The night was dark and lowering, with a fine dri
zle falling from the flying gulf clouds. Black Eagle crouche
behind a bush within five yards of the track. Two six-shoote
were belted around him. Occasionally he drew a large blac
bottle from his pocket and raised it to his mouth.

A star appeared far down the track which soon waxed int
the headlight of the approaching train. It came on with a
increasing roar; the engine bore down upon the ambushin
desperadoes with a glare and a shriek like some avenging mon
ster come to deliver them to justice. Black Eagle flattene
himself upon the ground. The engine, contrary to their calcu
lations, instead of stopping between him and Bud King's plac
of concealment, passed fully forty yards farther before it cam
to a stand.

The bandit leader rose to his feet and peered around th
bush. His men all lay quiet, awaiting the signal. Immediatel
opposite Black Eagle was a thing that drew his attention. In
stead of being a regular passenger train it was a mixed on
Before him stood a box car, the door of which, by som
means, had been left slightly open. Black Eagle went up to

nd pushed the door farther open. An odor came forth—a mp, rancid, familiar, musty, intoxicating, beloved odor stirng strongly at old memories of happy days and travels. Black agle sniffed at the witching smell as the returned wanderer nells of the rose that twines his boyhood's cottage home. ostalgia seized him. He put his hand inside. Excelsior—dry, ringy, curly, soft, enticing, covered the floor. Outside the izzle had turned to a chilling rain.

The train bell clanged. The bandit chief unbuckled his belt nd cast it, with its revolvers, upon the ground. His spurs llowed quickly, and his broad sombrero. Black Eagle was oulting. The train started with a rattling jerk. The ex-Terror the Border scrambled into the box car and closed the door. retched luxuriously upon the excelsior, with the black bottle asped closely to his breast, his eyes closed, and a foolish, ppy smile upon his terrible features, Chicken Ruggles arted upon his return trip.

Undisturbed, with the band of desperate bandits lying monless, awaiting the signal to attack, the train pulled out om Espina. As its speed increased, and the black masses of haparral went whizzing past on either side, the express messnger, lighting his pipe, looked through his window and rearked, feelingly:

"What a jim-dandy place for a hold-up!"

A Retrieved Reformation

GUARD came to the prison shoe-shop, where Jimmy Valenne was assiduously stitching uppers, and escorted him to the ont office. There the warden handed Jimmy his pardon, hich had been signed that morning by the governor. Jimmy

took it in a tired kind of way. He had served nearly te months of a four-year sentence. He had expected to stay onl about three months, at the longest. When a man with as man friends on the outside as Jimmy Valentine had is received i the "stir" it is hardly worth while to cut his hair.

"Now, Valentine," said the warden, "you'll go out in th morning. Brace up, and make a man of yourself. You're no a bad fellow at heart. Stop cracking safes, and live straight.

"Me?" said Jimmy, in surprise. "Why, I never cracked a saf in my life."

"Oh, no," laughed the warden. "Of course not. Let's see now. How was it you happened to get sent up on that Spring field job? Was it because you wouldn't prove an alibi for fea of compromising somebody in extremely high-toned society Or was it simply a case of a mean old jury that had it in fo you? It's always one or the other with you innocent victims.

"Me?" said Jimmy, still blankly virtuous. "Why, warden, never was in Springfield in my life!"

"Take him back, Cronin," smiled the warden, "and fix hi up with outgoing clothes. Unlock him at seven in the morn ing, and let him come to the bull-pen. Better think over m advice, Valentine."

At a quarter past seven on the next morning Jimmy stoo in the warden's outer office. He had on a suit of the villai ously fitting, ready-made clothes and a pair of the stif squeaky shoes that the state furnishes to its discharged con pulsory guests.

The clerk handed him a railroad ticket and the five-doll bill with which the law expected him to rehabilitate himse into good citizenship and prosperity. The warden gave him cigar, and shook hands. Valentine, 9762, was chronicled o the books "Pardoned by Governor," and Mr. James Valentin walked out into the sunshine.

Disregarding the song of the birds, the waving green tree

nd the smell of the flowers, Jimmy headed straight for a res-
urant. There he tasted the first sweet joys of liberty in the
nape of a broiled chicken and a bottle of white wine—fol-
owed by a cigar a grade better than the one the warden had
iven him. From there he proceeded leisurely to the depot.
Ie tossed a quarter into the hat of a blind man sitting by
ne door, and boarded his train. Three hours set him down
n a little town near the state line. He went to the café of one
Iike Dolan and shook hands with Mike, who was alone be-
ind the bar.

"Sorry we couldn't make it sooner, Jimmy, me boy," said
Iike. "But we had that protest from Springfield to buck
gainst, and the governor nearly balked. Feeling all right?"

"Fine," said Jimmy. "Got my key?"

He got his key and went upstairs, unlocking the door of a
oom at the rear. Everything was just as he had left it. There
n the floor was still Ben Price's collar-button that had been
orn from that eminent detective's shirt-band when they had
verpowered Jimmy to arrest him.

Pulling out from the wall a folding-bed, Jimmy slid back
panel in the wall and dragged out a dust-covered suitcase.
Ie opened this and gazed fondly at the finest set of burglar's
ools in the East. It was a complete set, made of specially
empered steel, the latest designs in drills, punches, braces
nd bits, jimmies, clamps, and augers, with two or three novel-
es invented by Jimmy himself, in which he took pride. Over
ine hundred dollars they had cost him to have made at ——,
place where they make such things for the profession.

In half an hour Jimmy went downstairs and through the
afé. He was now dressed in tasteful and well-fitting clothes,
nd carried his dusted and cleaned suitcase in his hand.

"Got anything on?" asked Mike Dolan, genially.

"Me?" said Jimmy, in a puzzled tone. "I don't understand.

I'm representing the New York Amalgamated Short Snap Biscuit Cracker and Frazzled Wheat Company."

This statement delighted Mike to such an extent that Jimmy had to take a seltzer-and-milk on the spot. He never touched "hard" drinks.

A week after the release of Valentine, 9762, there was a neat job of safe-burglary done in Richmond, Indiana, with no clue to the author. A scant eight hundred dollars was all that was secured. Two weeks after that a patented, improved, burglar-proof safe in Logansport was opened like a cheese to the tune of fifteen hundred dollars, currency; securities and silver untouched. That began to interest the rogue-catchers. Then an old-fashioned bank-safe in Jefferson City became active and threw out of its crater an eruption of bank-notes amounting to five thousand dollars. The losses were now high enough to bring the matter up into Ben Price's class of work. By comparing notes, a remarkable similarity in the methods of the burglaries was noticed. Ben Price investigated the scenes of the robberies, and was heard to remark:

"That's Dandy Jim Valentine's autograph. He's resumed business. Look at that combination knob—jerked out as easy as pulling up a radish in wet weather. He's got the only clamps that can do it. And look how clean those tumblers were punched out! Jimmy never has to drill but one hole. Yes, I guess I want Mr. Valentine. He'll do his bit next time without any short-time or clemency foolishness."

Ben Price knew Jimmy's habits. He had learned them while working up the Springfield case. Long jumps, quick get-aways, no confederates, and a taste for good society—these ways had helped Mr. Valentine to become noted as a successful dodger of retribution. It was given out that Ben Price had taken up the trail of the elusive cracksman, and other people with burglar-proof safes felt more at ease.

One afternoon Jimmy Valentine and his suitcase climbed

ut of the mail-hack in Elmore, a little town five miles off he railroad down in the black-jack country of Arkansas. immy, looking like an athletic young senior just home from ollege, went down the board sidewalk toward the hotel.

A young lady crossed the street, passed him at the corner nd entered a door over which was the sign "The Elmore ank." Jimmy Valentine looked into her eyes, forgot what he as, and became another man. She lowered her eyes and olored slightly. Young men of Jimmy's style and looks were carce in Elmore.

Jimmy collared a boy that was loafing on the steps of the ank as if he were one of the stock-holders, and began to ask im questions about the town, feeding him dimes at intervals. y and by the young lady came out, looking royally uncon- cious of the young man with the suitcase, and went her way.

"Isn't that young lady Miss Polly Simpson?" asked Jimmy, ith specious guile.

"Naw," said the boy. "She's Annabel Adams. Her pa owns his bank. What'd you come to Elmore for? Is that a gold atch-chain? I'm going to get a bulldog. Got any more imes?"

Jimmy went to the Planters' Hotel, registered as Ralph D. pencer, and engaged a room. He leaned on the desk and eclared his platform to the clerk. He said he had come to lmore to look for a location to go into business. How was the hoe business, now, in the town? He had thought of the shoe usiness. Was there an opening?

The clerk was impressed by the clothes and manner of immy. He, himself, was something of a pattern of fashion o the thinly gilded youth of Elmore, but he now perceived is shortcomings. While trying to figure out Jimmy's manner f tying his four-in-hand, he cordially gave information.

Yes, there ought to be a good opening in the shoe line. here wasn't an exclusive shoe-store in the place. The dry-

goods and general stores handled them. Business in all lines was fairly good. Hoped Mr. Spencer would decide to locate in Elmore. He would find it a pleasant town to live in, and the people very sociable.

Mr. Spencer thought he would stop over in the town a few days and look over the situation. No, the clerk needn't call the boy. He would carry up his suitcase, himself; it was rather heavy.

Mr. Ralph Spencer, the phœnix that arose from Jimmy Valentine's ashes—ashes left by the flame of a sudden and alternative attack of love—remained in Elmore, and prospered. He opened a shoe-store and secured a good run of trade.

Socially he was also a success, and made many friends. And he accomplished the wish of his heart. He met Miss Annabel Adams, and became more and more captivated by her charms.

At the end of a year the situation of Mr. Ralph Spencer was this: he had won the respect of the community, his shoe-store was flourishing, and he and Annabel were engaged to be married in two weeks. Mr. Adams, the typical, plodding country banker, approved of Spencer. Annabel's pride in him almost equalled her affection. He was as much at home in the family of Mr. Adams and that of Annabel's married sister as if he were already a member.

One day Jimmy sat down in his room and wrote this letter which he mailed to the safe address of one of his old friends in St. Louis:

Dear Old Pal:

I want you to be at Sullivan's place, in Little Rock, next Wednesday night at nine o'clock. I want you to wind up some little matters for me. And, also, I want to make you a present of my kit of tools. I know you'll be glad to get them—you couldn't duplicate the lot for a thousand dollars. Say, Billy, I've quit the old business—a year ago. I've got a nice store. I'm making

n honest living, and I'm going to marry the finest girl on earth vo weeks from now. It's the only life, Billy—the straight one. wouldn't touch a dollar of another man's money now for a illion. After I get married I'm going to sell out and go West, here there won't be so much danger of having old scores brought p against me. I tell you, Billy, she's an angel. She believes in e; and I wouldn't do another crooked thing for the whole world. e sure to be at Sully's, for I must see you. I'll bring along the ols with me.

Your old friend,
JIMMY.

On the Monday night after Jimmy wrote this letter, Ben rice jogged unobtrusively into Elmore in a livery buggy. He unged about town in his quiet way until he found out what e wanted to know. From the drug-store across the street from pencer's shoe-store he got a good look at Ralph D. Spencer.

"Going to marry the banker's daughter, are you, Jimmy?" id Ben to himself, softly. "Well, I don't know!"

The next morning Jimmy took breakfast at the Adamses. Ie was going to Little Rock that day to order his wedding- it and buy something nice for Annabel. That would be the rst time he had left town since he came to Elmore. It had een more than a year now since those last professional obs," and he thought he could safely venture out.

After breakfast quite a family party went down town to- ether—Mr. Adams, Annabel, Jimmy, and Annabel's married ster with her two little girls, aged five and nine. They came y the hotel where Jimmy still boarded, and he ran up to his oom and brought along his suitcase. Then they went on to ie bank. There stood Jimmy's horse and buggy and Dolph ibson, who was going to drive him over to the railroad ation.

All went inside the high, carved oak railings into the nking-room—Jimmy included, for Mr. Adams's future son-

in-law was welcome anywhere. The clerks were pleased to be greeted by the good-looking, agreeable young man who was going to marry Miss Annabel. Jimmy set his suitcase down. Annabel, whose heart was bubbling with happiness and lively youth, put on Jimmy's hat and picked up the suitcase. "Wouldn't I make a nice drummer?" said Annabel. "My! Ralph, how heavy it is. Feels like it was full of gold bricks."

"Lot of nickel-plated shoe-horns in there," said Jimmy, coolly, "that I'm going to return. Thought I'd save express charges by taking them up. I'm getting awfully economical."

The Elmore Bank had just put in a new safe and vault. Mr. Adams was very proud of it, and insisted on an inspection by every one. The vault was a small one, but it had a new patented door. It fastened with three solid steel bolts thrown simultaneously with a single handle, and had a time-lock. Mr. Adams beamingly explained its workings to Mr. Spencer, who showed a courteous but not too intelligent interest. The two children, May and Agatha, were delighted by the shining metal and funny clock and knobs.

While they were thus engaged Ben Price sauntered in and leaned on his elbow, looking casually inside between the railings. He told the teller that he didn't want anything; he was just waiting for a man he knew.

Suddenly there was a scream or two from the women, and a commotion. Unperceived by the elders, May, the nine-year-old girl, in a spirit of play, had shut Agatha in the vault. She had then shot the bolts and turned the knob of the combination as she had seen Mr. Adams do.

The old banker sprang to the handle and tugged at it for a moment. "The door can't be opened," he groaned. "The clock hasn't been wound nor the combination set."

Agatha's mother screamed again, hysterically.

"Hush!" said Mr. Adams, raising his trembling hand. "All be quiet for a moment. Agatha!" he called as loudly as he

ould. "Listen to me." During the following silence they could ust hear the faint sound of the child wildly shrieking in the lark vault in a panic of terror.

"My precious darling!" wailed the mother. "She will die of right! Open the door! Oh, break it open! Can't you men do omething?"

"There isn't a man nearer than Little Rock who can open hat door," said Mr. Adams, in a shaky voice. "My God! Spencer, what shall we do? That child—she can't stand it long n there. There isn't enough air, and, besides, she'll go into onvulsions from fright."

Agatha's mother, frantic now, beat the door of the vault vith her hands. Somebody wildly suggested dynamite. Annabel turned to Jimmy, her large eyes full of anguish, but not et despairing. To a woman nothing seems quite impossible o the powers of the man she worships.

"Can't you do something, Ralph—*try*, won't you?"

He looked at her with a queer, soft smile on his lips and in is keen eyes.

"Annabel," he said, "give me that rose you are wearing, will ou?"

Hardly believing that she heard him aright, she unpinned he bud from the bosom of her dress, and placed it in his and. Jimmy stuffed it into his vest-pocket, threw off his coat nd pulled up his shirt-sleeves. With that act Ralph D. Spener passed away and Jimmy Valentine took his place.

"Get away from the door, all of you," he commanded, hortly.

He set his suitcase on the table, and opened it out flat. From that time on he seemed to be unconscious of the presnce of any one else. He laid out the shining, queer implenents swiftly and orderly, whistling softly to himself as he lways did when at work. In a deep silence and immovable, he others watched him as if under a spell.

In a minute Jimmy's pet drill was biting smoothly into the steel door. In ten minutes—breaking his own burglarious record—he threw back the bolts and opened the door.

Agatha, almost collapsed, but safe, was gathered into her mother's arms.

Jimmy Valentine put on his coat, and walked outside the railings toward the front door. As he went he thought he heard a far-away voice that he once knew call "Ralph!" But he never hesitated.

At the door a big man stood somewhat in his way.

"Hello, Ben!" said Jimmy, still with his strange smile. "Got around at last, have you? Well, let's go. I don't know that it makes much difference, now."

And then Ben Price acted rather strangely.

"Guess you're mistaken, Mr. Spencer," he said. "Don't believe I recognize you. Your buggy's waiting for you, ain't it?"

And Ben Price turned and strolled down the street.

The Renaissance at Charleroi

GRANDEMONT CHARLES was a little Creole gentleman, aged thirty-four, with a bald spot on the top of his head and the manners of a prince. By day he was a clerk in a cotton broker's office in one of those cold, rancid mountains of oozy brick down near the levee in New Orleans. By night, in his three story-high *chambre garnie* in the old French Quarter he was again the last male descendant of the Charles family, that noble house that had lorded it in France, and had pushed its way smiling, rapiered, and courtly into Louisiana's early and brilliant days. Of late years the Charleses had subsided into the more republican but scarcely less royally carried magnifi

ence and ease of plantation life along the Mississippi. Per-aps Grandemont was even Marquis de Brassé. There was hat title in the family. But a marquis on seventy-five dollars er month! *Vraiment!* Still, it has been done on less.

Grandemont had saved out of his salary the sum of six hun-red dollars. Enough, you would say, for any man to marry n. So, after a silence of two years on that subject, he re-pened that most hazardous question to Mlle. Adèle Fau-uier, riding down to Meade d'Or, her father's plantation. Her nswer was the same that it had been any time during the last en years: "First find my brother, Monsieur Charles."

This time he had stood before her, perhaps discouraged by love so long and hopeless, being dependent upon a contin-ency so unreasonable, and demanded to be told in simple vords whether she loved him or no.

Adèle looked at him steadily out of her gray eyes that be-rayed no secrets and answered, a little more softly:

"Grandemont, you have no right to ask that question un-ess you can do what I ask of you. Either bring back brother Victor to us or the proof that he died."

Somehow, though five times thus rejected, his heart was not o heavy when he left. She had not denied that she loved. Upon what shallow waters can the bark of passion remain float! Or, shall we play the doctrinaire, and hint that at hirty-four the tides of life are calmer and cognizant of many ources instead of but one—as at four-and-twenty?

Victor Fauquier would never be found. In those early days f his disappearance there was money to the Charles name, nd Grandemont had spent the dollars as if they were pica-unes in trying to find the lost youth. Even then he had had mall hope of success, for the Mississippi gives up a victim rom its oily tangles only at the whim of its malign will.

A thousand times had Grandemont conned in his mind the cene of Victor's disappearance. And, at each time that Adèle

had set her stubborn but pitiful alternative against his suit, still clearer it repeated itself in his brain.

The boy had been the family favorite: daring, winning, reckless. His unwise fancy had been captured by a girl on the plantation—the daughter of an overseer. Victor's family was in ignorance of the intrigue, as far as it had gone. To save them the inevitable pain that his course promised, Grandemont strove to prevent it. Omnipotent money smoothed the way. The overseer and his daughter left, between a sunset and dawn, for an undesignated bourne. Grandemont was confident that this stroke would bring the boy to reason. He rode over to Meade d'Or to talk with him. The two strolled out of the house and grounds, crossed the road, and, mounting the levee, walked its broad path while they conversed. A thundercloud was hanging, imminent, above, but, as yet, no rain fell. At Grandemont's disclosure of his interference in the clandestine romance, Victor attacked him, in a wild and sudden fury. Grandemont, though of slight frame, possessed muscles of iron. He caught the wrists amid a shower of blows descending upon him, bent the lad backward and stretched him upon the levee path. In a little while the gust of passion was spent, and he was allowed to rise. Calm now, but a powder mine where he had been but a whiff of the tantrums, Victor extended his hand toward the dwelling house of Meade d'Or.

"You and they," he cried, "have conspired to destroy my happiness. None of you shall ever look upon my face again."

Turning, he ran swiftly down the levee, disappearing in the darkness. Grandemont followed as well as he could, calling to him, but in vain. For longer than an hour he pursued the search. Descending the side of the levee, he penetrated the rank density of weeds and willows that undergrew the trees until the river's edge, shouting Victor's name. There was never an answer, though once he thought he heard a bubbling

scream from the dun waters sliding past. Then the storm broke, and he returned to the house drenched and dejected.

There he explained the boy's absence sufficiently, he thought, not speaking of the tangle that had led to it, for he hoped that Victor would return as soon as his anger had cooled. Afterward, when the threat was made good and they saw his face no more, he found it difficult to alter his explanations of that night, and there clung a certain mystery to the boy's reasons for vanishing as well as to the manner of it.

It was on that night that Grandemont first perceived a new and singular expression in Adèle's eyes whenever she looked at him. And through the years following that expression was always there. He could not read it, for it was born of a thought she would never otherwise reveal.

Perhaps, if he had known that Adèle had stood at the gate on that unlucky night, where she had followed, lingering to await the return of her brother and lover, wondering why they had chosen so tempestuous an hour and so black a spot to hold converse—if he had known that a sudden flash of lightning had revealed to her sight that short, sharp struggle as Victor was sinking under his hands, he might have explained everything, and she——

I know not what she would have done. But one thing is clear—there was something besides her brother's disappearance between Grandemont's pleadings for her hand and Adèle's "yes." Ten years had passed, and what she had seen during the space of that lightning flash remained an indelible picture. She had loved her brother, but was she holding out for the solution of that mystery or for the "Truth"! Women have been known to reverence it, even as an abstract principle. It is said there have been a few who, in the matter of their affections, have considered a life to be a small thing as compared with a lie. That I do not know. But, I wonder, had Grandemont cast himself at her feet crying that his hand had

sent Victor to the bottom of that inscrutable river, and that he could no longer sully his love with a lie, I wonder if—I wonder what she would have done!

But, Grandemont Charles, Arcadian little gentleman, never guessed the meaning of that look in Adèle's eyes; and from this last bootless payment of his devoirs he rode away as rich as ever in honor and love, but poor in hope.

That was in September. It was during the first winter month that Grandemont conceived his idea of the *renaissance*. Since Adèle would never be his, and wealth without her were useless trumpery, why need he add to that hoard of slowly harvested dollars? Why should he even retain that hoard?

Hundreds were the cigarettes he consumed over his claret, sitting at the little polished tables in the Royal Street cafés while thinking over his plan. By and by he had it perfect. It would cost, beyond doubt, all the money he had, but—*le jeu vaut la chandelle*—for some hours he would be once more a Charles of Charleroi. Once again should the nineteenth of January, that most significant day in the fortunes of the house of Charles, be fittingly observed. On that date the French king had seated a Charles by his side at table; on that date Armand Charles, Marquis de Brassé, landed, like a brilliant meteor, in New Orleans; it was the date of his mother's wedding; of Grandemont's birth. Since Grandemont could remember until the breaking up of the family that anniversary had been the synonym for feasting, hospitality, and proud commemoration.

Charleroi was the old family plantation, lying some twenty miles down the river. Years ago the estate had been sold to discharge the debts of its too-bountiful owners. Once again it had changed hands, and now the must and mildew of litigation had settled upon it. A question of heirship was in the courts, and the dwelling house of Charleroi, unless the tales

ld of ghostly powdered and laced Charleses haunting its un-choing chambers were true, stood uninhabited.

Grandemont found the solicitor in chancery who held the eys pending the decision. He proved to be an old friend of ie family. Grandemont explained briefly that he desired to nt the house for two or three days. He wanted to give a inner at his old home to a few friends. That was all.

"Take it for a week—a month, if you will," said the solici-r; "but do not speak to me of rental." With a sigh he con-uded: "The dinners I have eaten under that roof, *mon fils!*"

There came to many of the old-established dealers in fur-iture, china, silverware, decorations, and household fittings their stores on Canal, Chartres, St. Charles and Royal reets, a quiet young man with a little bald spot on the top his head, distinguished manners, and the eye of a *connois-ur*, who explained what he wanted. To hire the complete id elegant equipment of a dining-room, hall, reception-oom, and cloak-rooms. The goods were to be packed and nt, by boat, to the Charleroi landing, and would be returned ithin three or four days. All damage or loss to be promptly aid for.

Many of those old merchants knew Grandemont by sight, id the Charleses of old by association. Some of them were Creole stock and felt a thrill of responsive sympathy with ie magnificently indiscreet design of this impoverished clerk ho would revive but for a moment the ancient flame of glory ith the fuel of his savings.

"Choose what you want," they said to him. "Handle every-ing carefully. See that the damage bill is kept low, and the harges for the loan will not oppress you."

To the wine merchants next; and here a doleful slice was pped from the six hundred. It was an exquisite pleasure to randemont once more to pick among the precious vintages. he champagne bins lured him like the abodes of sirens, but

these he was forced to pass. With his six hundred he stood before them as a child with a penny stands before a French doll. But he bought with taste and discretion of other wines —Chablis, Moselle, Château d'Or, Hochheimer, and port of right age and pedigree.

The matter of the cuisine gave him some studious hours until he suddenly recollected André—André, their old *chef*—the most sublime master of French Creole cookery in the Mississippi Valley. Perhaps he was yet somewhere about the plantation. The solicitor had told him that the place was still being cultivated, in accordance with a compromise agreement between the litigants.

On the next Sunday after the thought Grandemont rode, horseback, down to Charleroi. The big, square house with its two long ells looked blank and cheerless with its closed shutters and doors.

The shrubbery in the yard was ragged and riotous. Fallen leaves from the grove littered the walks and porches. Turning down the lane at the side of the house, Grandemont rode on to the quarters of the plantation hands. He found the workers streaming back from church, careless, happy, and bedecked in gay yellows, reds, and blues.

Yes, André was still there; his wool a little grayer; his mouth as wide; his laughter as ready as ever. Grandemont told him of his plan, and the old *chef* swayed with pride and delight. With a sigh of relief, knowing that he need have no further concern until the serving of that dinner was announced, he placed in André's hands a liberal sum for the cost of it, giving *carte blanche* for its creation.

Among the blacks were also a number of the old house servants. Absalom, the former major domo, and a half-dozen of the younger men, once waiters and attachés of the kitchen, pantry, and other domestic departments, crowded around to meet "*M'shi Grande.*" Absalom guaranteed to marshal, of

ese, a corps of assistants that would perform with credit the rving of the dinner.

After distributing a liberal largesse among the faithful, randemont rode back to town well pleased. There were any other smaller details to think of and provide for, but entually the scheme was complete, and now there remained ly the issuance of the invitations to his guests.

Along the river within the scope of a score of miles dwelt me half-dozen families with whose princely hospitality that the Charleses had been contemporaneous. They were the oudest and most august of the old régime. Their small circle d been a brilliant one; their social relations close and warm; eir houses full of rare welcome and discriminating bounty. hose friends, said Grandemont, should once more, if never ain, sit at Charleroi on a nineteenth of January to celebrate e festal day of his house.

Grandemont had his cards of invitation engraved. They ere expensive, but beautiful. In one particular their good ste might have been disputed; but the Creole allowed him-lf that one feather in the cap of his fugacious splendor. ight he not be allowed, for the one day of the *renaissance*, be "Grandemont du Puy Charles, of Charleroi"? He sent e invitations out early in January so that the guests might ot fail to receive due notice.

At eight o'clock in the morning of the nineteenth, the wer coast steamboat *River Belle* gingerly approached the ng unused landing at Charleroi. The bridge was lowered, d a swarm of the plantation hands streamed along the rot-ng pier, bearing ashore a strange assortment of freight. Great apeless bundles and bales and packets swathed in cloths d bound with ropes; tubs and urns of palms, evergreens, d tropical flowers; tables, mirrors, chairs, couches, carpets, d pictures—all carefully bound and padded against the ngers of transit.

Grandemont was among them, the busiest there. To the safe conveyance of certain large hampers eloquent with printed cautions to delicate handling he gave his superintendence, for they contained the fragile china and glassware. The dropping of one of those hampers would have cost him more than he could have saved in a year.

The last article unloaded, the *River Belle* backed off and continued her course down stream. In less than an hour everything had been conveyed to the house. And came then Absalom's task, directing the placing of the furniture and wares. There was plenty of help, for that day was always a holiday in Charleroi, and the Negroes did not suffer the old traditions to lapse. Almost the entire population of the quarters volunteered their aid. A score of piccaninnies were sweeping at the leaves in the yard. In the big kitchen at the rear André was lording it with his old-time magnificence over his numerous sub-cooks and scullions. Shutters were flung wide; dust spun in clouds; the house echoed to voices and the tread of busy feet. The prince had come again, and Charleroi woke from its long sleep.

The full moon, as she rose across the river that night and peeped above the levee, saw a sight that had been long missing from her orbit. The old plantation house shed a soft and alluring radiance from every window. Of its two-score rooms only four had been refurnished—the large reception chamber, the dining hall, and two smaller rooms for the convenience of the expected guests. But lighted wax candles were set in the windows of every room.

The dining hall was the *chef-d'œuvre*. The long table, set with twenty-five covers, sparkled like a winter landscape with its snowy napery and china and the icy gleam of crystal. The chaste beauty of the room had required small adornment. The polished floor burned to a glowing ruby with the reflection of candlelight. The rich wainscoting reached halfway to the

ling. Along and above this had been set the relieving light-
ss of a few water-color sketches of fruit and flower.
The reception chamber was fitted in a simple but elegant
le. Its arrangement suggested nothing of the fact that on
e morrow the rooms would again be cleared and abandoned
the dust and the spider. The entrance hall was imposing
h palms and ferns and the light of an immense candela-
ım.
At seven o'clock Grandemont, in evening dress, with pearls
family passion—in his spotless linen, emerged from some-
ere. The invitations had specified eight as the dining hour.
drew an arm-chair upon the porch, and sat there, smoking
arettes and half dreaming.
The moon was an hour high. Fifty yards back from the gate
od the house, under its noble grove. The road ran in front,
d then came the grass-grown levee and the insatiate river
ond. Just above the levee top a tiny red light was creeping
wn and a tiny green one was creeping up. Then the passing
amers saluted, and the hoarse din startled the drowsy si-
ce of the melancholy lowlands. The stillness returned, save
the little voices of the night—the owl's recitative, the
riccio of the crickets, the concerto of the frogs in the grass.
e piccaninnies and the dawdlers from the quarters had
en dismissed to their confines, and the mêlée of the day
s reduced to an orderly and intelligent silence. The six
ored waiters, in their white jackets, paced, cat-footed, about
table, pretending to arrange where all was beyond better-
nt. Absalom, in black and shining pumps, posed, superior,
e and there where the lights set off his grandeur. And
andemont rested in his chair, waiting for his guests.
He must have drifted into a dream—and an extravagant one
or he was master of Charleroi and Adèle was his wife. She
s coming out to him now; he could hear her steps; he
ld feel her hand upon his shoulder——

"*Pardon moi, M'shi Grande*"—it was Absalom's han touching him, it was Absalom's voice, speaking the *patois* o the blacks—"but it is eight o'clock."

Eight o'clock. Grandemont sprang up. In the moonlight h could see the row of hitching-posts outside the gate. Long ag the horses of the guests should have stood there. They we vacant.

A chanted roar of indignation, a just, waxing bellow of a front and dishonored genius came from André's kitchen, fi ing the house with rhythmic protest. The beautiful dinner, th pearl of a dinner, the little excellent superb jewel of a di ner! But one moment more of waiting and not even the tho sand thunders of black pigs of the quarters would touch i

"They are a little late," said Grandemont, calmly. "The will come soon. Tell André to hold back dinner. And ask hi if, by some chance, a bull from the pastures has broken, roa ing, into the house."

He seated himself again to his cigarettes. Though he ha said it, he scarcely believed Charleroi would entertain co pany that night. For the first time in history the invitatio of a Charles had been ignored. So simple in courtesy an honor was Grandemont and, perhaps, so serenely confide in the prestige of his name, that the most likely reasons for h vacant board did not occur to him.

Charleroi stood by a road traveled daily by people fro those plantations whither his invitations had gone. No dou even on the day before the sudden reanimation of the o house they had driven past and observed the evidences long desertion and decay. They had looked at the corpse Charleroi and then at Grandemont's invitations, and, thoug the puzzle or tasteless hoax or whatever the thing meant le them perplexed, they would not seek its solution by the fol of a visit to that deserted house.

The moon was now above the grove, and the yard was pi

h deep shadows save where they lightened in the tender
w of outpouring candlelight. A crisp breeze from the river
ted at the possibility of frost when the night should have
ome older. The grass at one side of the steps was specked
h the white stubs of Grandemont's cigarettes. The cotton-
ker's clerk sat in his chair with the smoke spiralling above
. I doubt that he once thought of the little fortune he
so impotently squandered. Perhaps it was compensation
ugh for him to sit thus at Charleroi for a few retrieved
rs. Idly his mind wandered in and out many fanciful paths
memory. He smiled to himself as a paraphrased line of
ipture strayed into his mind: "A certain *poor* man made a
t."

He heard the sound of Absalom coughing a note of sum-
ns. Grandemont stirred. This time he had not been asleep
nly drowsing.

Nine o'clock, *M'shi Grande*," said Absalom in the unin-
ted voice of a good servant who states a fact unqualified
personal opinion.

Grandemont rose to his feet. In their time all the Charleses
been proven, and they were gallant losers.

Serve dinner," he said, calmly. And then he checked
alom's movement to obey, for something clicked the gate
h and was coming down the walk towards the house.
nething that shuffled its feet and muttered to itself as it
e. It stopped in the current of light at the foot of the
s and spake, in the universal whine of the gadding men-
nt.

Kind sir, could you spare a poor, hungry man, out of luck,
ttle to eat? And to sleep in the corner of a shed? For"—
thing concluded, irrelevantly—"I can sleep now. There are
mountains to dance reels in the night; and the copper ket-
are all scoured bright. The iron band is still around my
le, and a link, if it is your desire I should be chained."

It set a foot upon the step and drew up the rags that hur upon the limb. Above the distorted shoe, caked with the du of a hundred leagues, they saw the link and the iron ban The clothes of the tramp were wrecked to piebald tatters l sun and rain and wear. A mat of brown, tangled hair ar beard covered his head and face, out of which his eyes stare distractedly. Grandemont noticed that he carried in one har a white, square card.

"What is that?" he asked.

"I picked it up, sir, at the side of the road." The vagabor handed the card to Grandemont. "Just a little to eat, sir. little parched corn, a *tortilla*, or a handful of beans. Goa meat I cannot eat. When I cut their throats they cry li children."

Grandemont held up the card. It was one of his own in tations to dinner. No doubt someone had cast it away from passing carriage after comparing it with the tenantless hou at Charleroi.

"From the hedges and highways bid them come," he sa to himself, softly smiling. And then to Absalom: "Send Lo to me."

Louis, once his own body-servant, came promptly, in l white jacket.

"This gentleman," said Grandemont, "will dine with n Furnish him with bath and clothes. In twenty minutes ha him ready and dinner served."

Louis approached the disreputable guest with the suav due to a visitor to Charleroi, and spirited him away to in regions.

Promptly, in twenty minutes, Absalom announced dinn and, a moment later, the guest was ushered into the dini hall where Grandemont waited, standing, at the head of t table. The attentions of Louis had transformed the stran into something resembling the polite animal. Clean linen a

n old evening suit that had been sent down from town to
othe a waiter had worked a miracle with his exterior. Brush
nd comb had partially subdued the wild disorder of his hair.
ow he might have passed for no more extravagant a thing
an one of those *poseurs* in art and music who affect such
ldity of guise. The man's countenance and demeanor, as he
pproached the table, exhibited nothing of the awkwardness
confusion to be expected from his Arabian Nights change.
e allowed Absalom to seat him at Grandemont's right hand
ith the manner of one thus accustomed to be waited upon.

"It grieves me," said Grandemont, "to be obliged to ex-
nange names with a guest. My own name is Charles."

"In the mountains," said the wayfarer, "they call me
ringo. Along the roads they call me Jack."

"I prefer the latter," said Grandemont. "A glass of wine
ith you, Mr. Jack."

Course after course was served by the supernumerous
aiters. Grandemont, inspired by the results of André's ex-
uisite skill in cookery and his own in the selection of wines,
ecame the model host, talkative, witty, and genial. The
est was fitful in conversation. His mind seemed to be sus-
ining a succession of waves of dementia followed by inter-
ls of comparative lucidity. There was the glassy brightness
recent fever in his eyes. A long course of it must have been
e cause of his emaciation and weakness, his distracted
ind, and the dull pallor that showed even through the tan
wind and sun.

"Charles," he said to Grandemont—for thus he seemed to
terpret his name—"you never saw the mountains dance, did
u?"

"No, Mr. Jack," answered Grandemont, gravely, "the spec-
cle has been denied me. But, I assure you, I can understand
must be a diverting sight. The big ones, you know, white
th snow on the tops, waltzing—*décolleté*, we may say."

"You first scour the kettles," said Mr. Jack, leaning toward him excitedly, "to cook the beans in in the morning, and you lie down on a blanket and keep quite still. Then they come out and dance for you. You would go out and dance with them but you are chained every night to the centre pole of the hut. You believe the mountains dance, don't you Charlie?"

"I contradict no traveler's tales," said Grandemont, with a smile.

Mr. Jack laughed loudly. He dropped his voice to a confidential whisper.

"You are a fool to believe it," he went on. "They don't really dance. It's the fever in your head. It's the hard work and the bad water that does it. You are sick for weeks and there is no medicine. The fever comes on every evening, and then you are as strong as two men. One night the *compañi* are lying drunk with *mescal*. They have brought back sacks of silver dollars from a ride, and they drink to celebrate. In the night you file the chain in two and go down the mountain. You walk for miles—hundreds of them. By and by the mountains are all gone, and you come to the prairies. They do not dance at night; they are merciful, and you sleep. Then you come to the river, and it says things to you. You follow it down, down, but you can't find what you are looking for."

Mr. Jack leaned back in his chair, and his eyes slowly closed. The food and wine had steeped him in a deep calm. The tense strain had been smoothed from his face. The languor of repletion was claiming him. Drowsily he spoke again.

"It's bad manners—I know—to go to sleep—at table—but—that was—such a good dinner—Grande, old fellow."

Grande! The owner of the name started and set down his glass. How should this wretched tatterdemalion whom he had invited, Caliphlike, to sit at his feast know his name?

Not at first, but soon, little by little, the suspicion, wil

l unreasonable as it was, stole into his brain. He drew out watch with hands that almost balked him by their trem-ng, and opened the back case. There was a picture there photograph fixed to the inner side.

Rising, Grandemont shook Mr. Jack by the shoulder. The ary guest opened his eyes. Grandemont held the watch.

'Look at this picture, Mr. Jack. Have you ever——"

'My sister Adèle!"

The vagrant's voice rang loud and sudden through the m. He started to his feet, but Grandemont's arms were out him, and Grandemont was calling him "Victor!—ctor Fauquier! *Merci, merci, mon Dieu!*"

Too far overcome by sleep and fatigue was the lost one talk that night. Days afterward, when the tropic *calentura* l cooled in his veins, the disordered fragments he had ken were completed in shape and sequence. He told the ry of his angry flight, of toils and calamities on sea and re, of his ebbing and flowing fortune in southern lands, l of his latest peril when, held a captive, he served meni-in a stronghold of bandits in the Sonora Mountains of xico. And of the fever that seized him there and his escape l delirium, during which he strayed, perhaps led by some rvelous instinct, back to the river on whose bank he had en born. And of the proud and stubborn thing in his blood t had kept him silent through all those years, clouding the nor of one, though he knew it not, and keeping apart two ing hearts. "What a thing is love!" you may say. And if I nt it, you shall say, with me: "What a thing is pride!"

On a couch in the reception chamber Victor lay, with a vning understanding in his heavy eyes and peace in his tened countenance. Absalom was preparing a lounge for transient master of Charleroi, who, to-morrow, would be in the clerk of a cotton broker, but also——

'To-morrow," Grandemont was saying, as he stood by the

couch of his guest, speaking the words with his face shining as must have shone the face of Elijah's charioteer when he announced the glories of that heavenly journey—"To-morrow I will take you to Her."

Shoes

JOHN DE GRAFFENREID ATWOOD ate of the lotus, root, stem and flower. The tropics gobbled him up. He plunged enthusiastically into his work, which was to try to forget Rosine.

Now, they who dine on the lotus rarely consume it plain. There is a sauce *au diable* that goes with it; and the distillers are the chefs who prepare it. And on Johnny's menu card it read "brandy." With a bottle between them, he and Billy Keogh would sit on the porch of the little consulate at night and roar out great, indecorous songs, until the natives, slipping hastily past, would shrug a shoulder and mutter things to themselves about the "*Americanos diablos.*"

One day Johnny's *mozo* brought the mail and dumped it on the table. Johnny leaned from his hammock, and fingered the four or five letters dejectedly. Keogh was sitting on the edge of the table chopping lazily with a paper knife at the legs of a centipede that was crawling among the stationery. Johnny was in that phase of lotus-eating when all the world tastes bitter in one's mouth.

"Same old thing!" he complained. "Fool people writing for information about the country. They want to know all about raising fruit, and how to make a fortune without work. Half of 'em don't even send stamps for a reply. They think a consul hasn't anything to do but write letters. Slit those envelopes

me, old man, and see what they want. I'm feeling too
ky to move."

Keogh, acclimated beyond all possibility of ill-humor, drew
chair to the table with smiling compliance on his rose-
k countenance, and began to slit open the letters. Four
them were from citizens in various parts of the United
tes who seemed to regard the consul at Coralio as a
lopædia of information. They asked long lists of ques-
ns, numerically arranged, about the climate, products, pos-
ilities, laws, business chances, and statistics of the country
which the consul had the honor of representing his own
vernment.

"Write 'em, please, Billy," said that inert official, "just a
e, referring them to the latest consular report. Tell 'em the
te Department will be delighted to furnish the literary
ns. Sign my name. Don't let your pen scratch, Billy; it'll
ep me awake."

"Don't snore," said Keogh, amiably, "and I'll do your work
you. You need a corps of assistants, anyhow. Don't see
w you ever get out a report. Wake up a minute!—here's
e more letter—it's from your own town, too—Dalesburg."

"That so?" murmured Johnny, showing a mild obligatory
erest. "What's it about?"

"Postmaster writes," explained Keogh. "Says a citizen of the
vn wants some facts and advice from you. Says the citizen
s an idea in his head of coming down where you are and
ening a shoe store. Wants to know if you think the business
uld pay. Says he's heard of the boom along this coast, and
nts to get in on the ground floor."

In spite of the heat and his bad temper, Johnny's ham-
ck swayed with his laughter. Keogh laughed too; and the
monkey on the top shelf of the bookcase chattered in
ill sympathy with the ironical reception of the letter from
lesburg.

"Great bunions!" exclaimed the consul. "Shoe stor
What'll they ask about next, I wonder? Overcoat factory,
reckon. Say, Billy—of our 3,000 citizens, how many do yo
suppose ever had on a pair of shoes?"

Keogh reflected judicially.

"Let's see—there's you and me and——"

"Not me," said Johnny, promptly and incorrectly, holdin
up a foot encased in a disreputable deerskin *zapato*. "I haven
been a victim to shoes in months."

"But you've got 'em, though," went on Keogh. "And there
Goodwin and Blanchard and Geddie and old Lutz and Do
Gregg and that Italian that's agent for the banana compan
and there's old Delgado—no; he wears sandals. And, oh, ye
there's Madama Ortiz, 'what kapes the hotel'—she had on
pair of red slippers at the *baile* the other night. And Mi
Pasa, her daughter, that went to school in the States—sh
brought back some civilized notions in the way of footgea
And there's the *comandante's* sister that dresses up her fe
on feast-days—and Mrs. Geddie, who wears a two with
Castilian instep—and that's about all the ladies. Let's see
don't some of the soldiers at the *cuartel*—no that's so; they'
allowed shoes only when on the march. In barracks they tu
their little toeses out to grass."

"'Bout right," agreed the consul "Not over twenty out
the three thousand ever felt leather on their walking arrang
ments. Oh, yes; Coralio is just the town for an enterprisi
shoe store—that doesn't want to part with its goods. Wond
if old Patterson is trying to jolly me! He always was full
things he called jokes. Write him a letter, Billy. I'll dictate
We'll jolly him back a few."

Keogh dipped his pen, and wrote at Johnny's dictatio
With many pauses, filled in with smoke and sundry trav
lings of the bottle and glasses, the following reply to t

esburg communication was perpetrated:

Obadiah Patterson,
Dalesburg, Ala.

ear Sir: In reply to your favor of July 2d, I have the honor nform you that, according to my opinion, there is no place he habitable globe that presents to the eye stronger evidence he need of a first-class shoe store than does the town of ılio. There are 3,000 inhabitants in the place, and not a le shoe store! The situation speaks for itself. This coast is dly becoming the goal of enterprising business men, but the business is one that has been sadly overlooked or neglected. act, there are a considerable number of our citizens actually out shoes at present.

esides the want above mentioned, there is also a crying need a brewery, a college of higher mathematics, a coal yard, and an and intellectual Punch and Judy show. I have the honor e, sir,

Your Obt. Servant,
John de Graffenreid Atwood,
U. S. Consul at Coralio.

S.—Hello! Uncle Obadiah. How's the old burg racking g? What would the government do without you and me? k out for a green-headed parrot and a bunch of bananas soon, n your old friend

Johnny.

throw in that postscript," explained the consul, "so le Obadiah won't take offence at the official tone of the r! Now, Billy, you get that correspondence fixed up, and l Pancho to the post-office with it. The *Ariadne* takes the l out to-morrow if they make up that load of fruit to-day."

he night programme in Coralio never varied. The rec-ions of the people were soporific and flat. They wandered it, barefoot and aimless, speaking lowly and smoking r or cigarette. Looking down on the dimly lighted ways seemed to see a threading maze of brunette ghosts tan-

gled with a procession of insane fire-flies. In some houses th thrumming of lugubrious guitars added to the depression o the *triste* night. Giant tree-frogs rattled in the foliage as loud as the end man's "bones" in a minstrel troupe. By nine o'cloc the streets were almost deserted.

Not at the consulate was there often a change of bil Keogh would come there nightly, for Coralio's one coo place was the little seaward porch of that official residence.

The brandy would be kept moving; and before midnigh sentiment would begin to stir in the heart of the self-exile consul. Then he would relate to Keogh the story of his ende romance. Each night Keogh would listen patiently to the tal and be ready with untiring sympathy.

"But don't you think for a minute"—thus Johnny woul always conclude his woeful narrative—"that I'm grievin about that girl, Billy. I've forgotten her. She never enters m mind. If she were to enter that door right now, my pul wouldn't gain a beat. That's all over long ago."

"Don't I know it?" Keogh would answer. "Of course you' forgotten her. Proper thing to do. Wasn't quite O. K. of h to listen to the knocks that—er—Dink Pawson kept givin you."

"Pink Dawson!"—a world of contempt would be Johnny's tones—"Poor white trash! That's what he was. Ha five hundred acres of farming land, though; and that counte Maybe I'll have a chance to get back at him some day. Th Dawsons weren't anybody. Everybody in Alabama knows th Atwoods. Say, Billy—did you know my mother was a D Graffenreid?"

"Why, no," Keogh would say; "is that so?" He had hea it some three hundred times.

"Fact. The De Graffenreids of Hancock County. But never think of that girl any more, do I, Billy?"

'Not for a minute, my boy," would be the last sounds heard the conqueror of Cupid.

At this point Johnny would fall into a gentle slumber, and ogh would saunter out to his own shack under the cala-sh tree at the edge of the plaza.

In a day or two the letter from the Dalesburg postmaster d its answer had been forgotten by the Coralio exiles. But the 26th day of July the fruit of the reply appeared upon e tree of events.

The *Andador*, a fruit steamer that visited Coralio regularly, w into the offing and anchored. The beach was lined with ctators while the quarantine doctor and the custom-house w rowed out to attend to their duties.

An hour later Billy Keogh lounged into the consulate, clean d cool in his linen clothes, and grinning like a pleased rk.

'Guess what?" he said to Johnny, lounging in his ham-ck.

'Too hot to guess," said Johnny, lazily.

'Your shoe-store man's come," said Keogh, rolling the eet morsel on his tongue, "with a stock of goods big ough to supply the continent as far down as Tierra del ego. They're carting his cases over to the custom-house w. Six barges full they brought ashore and have paddled k for the rest. Oh, ye saints in glory! won't there be re-ements in the air when he gets onto the joke and has an erview with Mr. Consul? It'll be worth nine years in the pics just to witness that one joyful moment."

Keogh loved to take his mirth easily. He selected a clean ce on the matting and lay upon the floor. The walls shook h his enjoyment. Johnny turned half over and blinked.

'Don't tell me," he said, "that anybody was fool enough to e that letter seriously."

'Four-thousand-dollar stock of goods!" gasped Keogh, in

ecstasy. "Talk about coals to Newcastle! Why didn't he tak a ship-load of palm-leaf fans to Spitzbergen while he wa about it? Saw the old codger on the beach. You ought to hav been there when he put on his specs and squinted at the fiv hundred or so barefooted citizens standing around."

"Are you telling the truth, Billy?" asked the consul, weakly

"Am I? You ought to see the buncoed gentleman's daugh ter he brought along. Looks! She makes the brick-dust señ ritas here look like tar-babies."

"Go on," said Johnny, "if you can stop that asinine giggling I hate to see a grown man make a laughing hyena of himself.

"Name is Hemstetter," went on Keogh. "He's a—— Hello what's the matter now?"

Johnny's moccasined feet struck the floor with a thud as h wriggled out of his hammock.

"Get up, you idiot," he said, sternly, "or I'll brain you wit this inkstand. That's Rosine and her father. Gad! what drivelling idiot old Patterson is! Get up here, Billy Keogh and help me. What the devil are we going to do? Has all th world gone crazy?"

Keogh rose and dusted himself. He managed to regain decorous demeanor.

"Situation has got to be met, Johnny," he said, with som success at seriousness. "I didn't think about its being you girl until you spoke. First thing to do is to get them com fortable quarters. You go down and face the music, and I' trot out to Goodwin's and see if Mrs. Goodwin won't tak them in. They've got the decentest house in town."

"Bless you, Billy!" said the consul. "I knew you wouldn desert me. The world's bound to come to an end, but mayb we can stave it off for a day or two."

Keogh hoisted his umbrella and set out for Goodwin house. Johnny put on his coat and hat. He picked up th

andy bottle, but set it down again without drinking, and arched bravely down to the beach.

In the shade of the custom house walls he found Mr. emstetter and Rosine surrounded by a mass of gaping izens. The customs officers were ducking and scraping, ile the captain of the *Andador* interpreted the business of e new arrivals. Rosine looked healthy and very much alive. e was gazing at the strange scenes around her with amused erest. There was a faint blush upon her round cheek as e greeted her old admirer. Mr. Hemstetter shook hands th Johnny in a very friendly way. He was an oldish, im-actical man—one of that numerous class of erratic business en who are forever dissatisfied, and seeking a change.

"I am very glad to see you, John—may I call you John?" said. "Let me thank you for your prompt answer to our stmaster's letter of inquiry. He volunteered to write to you my behalf. I was looking about for something different the way of a business in which the profits would be greater. ad noticed in the papers that this coast was receiving much ention from investors. I am extremely grateful for your ad-e to come. I sold out everything that I possess, and invested e proceeds in as fine a stock of shoes as could be bought the North. You have a picturesque town here, John. I pe business will be as good as your letter justifies me in pecting."

Johnny's agony was abbreviated by the arrival of Keogh, o hurried up with the news that Mrs. Goodwin would be ch pleased to place rooms at the disposal of Mr. Hem-tter and his daughter. So there Mr. Hemstetter and Rosine re at once conducted and left to recuperate from the fa-ue of the voyage, while Johnny went down to see that the es of shoes were safely stored in the customs warehouse nding their examination by the officials. Keogh, grinning

like a shark, skirmished about to find Goodwin, to instruct him not to expose to Mr. Hemstetter the true state of Coralio as a shoe market until Johnny had been given a chance to redeem the situation, if such a thing were possible.

That night the consul and Keogh held a desperate consultation on the breezy porch of the consulate.

"Send 'em back home," began Keogh, reading Johnny's thoughts.

"I would," said Johnny, after a little silence; "but I've been lying to you, Billy."

"All right about that," said Keogh, affably.

"I've told you hundreds of times," said Johnny, slowly, "that I had forgotten that girl, haven't I?"

"About three hundred and seventy-five," admitted the monument of patience.

"I lied," repeated the consul, "every time. I never forgot her for one minute. I was an obstinate ass for running away just because she said 'No' once. And I was too proud a fool to go back. I talked with Rosine a few minutes this evening up at Goodwin's. I found out one thing. You remember that farmer fellow who was always after her?"

"Dink Pawson?" asked Keogh.

"Pink Dawson. Well, he wasn't a hill of beans to her. She says she didn't believe a word of the things he told her about me. But I'm sewed up now, Billy. That tomfool letter we sent ruined whatever chance I had left. She'll despise me when she finds out that her old father has been made the victim of a joke that a decent school boy wouldn't have been guilty of. Shoes! Why he couldn't sell twenty pairs of shoes in Coralio if he kept store here for twenty years. You put a pair of shoes on one of these Caribs or Spanish brown boys and what'd he do? Stand on his head and squeal until he'd kicked 'em off. None of 'em ever wore shoes and they never will. If I send

n back home I'll have to tell the whole story, and what'll e think of me? I want that girl worse than ever, Billy, and w when she's in reach I've lost her forever because I tried be funny when the thermometer was at 102."

"Keep cheerful," said the optimistic Keogh. "And let 'em en the store. I've been busy myself this afternoon. We can r up a temporary boom in foot-gear anyhow. I'll buy six irs when the doors open. I've been around and seen all the llows and explained the catastrophe. They'll all buy shoes e they was centipedes. Frank Goodwin will take cases of m. The Geddies want about eleven pairs between 'em. lancy is going to invest the savings of weeks, and even old oc Gregg wants three pairs of alligator-hide slippers if ey've got any tens. Blanchard got a look at Miss Hemstetter; d as he's a Frenchman, no less than a dozen pairs will do r him."

"A dozen customers," said Johnny, "for a $4,000 stock of oes! It won't work. There's a big problem here to figure out. ou go home, Billy, and leave me alone. I've got to work at all by myself. Take that bottle of Three-star along with you no, sir; not another ounce of booze for the United States nsul. I'll sit here to-night and pull out the think stop. If ere's a soft place on this proposition anywhere I'll land on If there isn't there'll be another wreck to the credit of the rgeous tropics."

Keogh left, feeling that he could be of no use. Johnny laid handful of cigars on a table and stretched himself in a eamer chair. When the sudden daylight broke, silvering the rbor ripples, he was still sitting there. Then he got up, whis-ing a little tune, and took his bath.

At nine o'clock he walked down to the dingy little cable fice and hung for half an hour over a blank. The result of s application was the following message, which he signed

and had transmitted at a cost of $33:

To Pinkney Dawson,
Dalesburg, Ala.

Draft for $100 comes to you next mail. Ship me immediately 500 pounds stiff, dry cockleburrs. New use here in arts. Market price twenty cents pound. Further orders likely. Rush.

Ships

Within a week a suitable building had been secured in the Calle Grande, and Mr. Hemstetter's stock of shoes arranged upon their shelves. The rent of the store was moderate; and the stock made a fine showing of neat white boxes, attractively displayed.

Johnny's friends stood by him loyally. On the first day Keogh strolled into the store in a casual kind of way about once every hour, and bought shoes. After he had purchased a pair each of extension soles, congress gaiters, button kids, low-quartered calfs, dancing pumps, rubber boots, tans of various hues, tennis shoes and flowered slippers, he sought out Johnny to be prompted as to names of other kinds that he might inquire for. The other English-speaking residents also played their parts nobly by buying often and liberally. Keogh was grand marshal, and made them distribute their patronage, thus keeping up a fair run of custom for several days.

Mr. Hemstetter was gratified by the amount of business done thus far; but expressed surprise that the natives were so backward with their custom.

"Oh, they're awfully shy," explained Johnny, as he wiped his forehead nervously. "They'll get the habit pretty soon. They'll come with a rush when they do come."

One afternoon Keogh dropped into the consul's office, ıewing an unlighted cigar thoughtfully.

"Got anything up your sleeve?" he inquired of Johnny. "If ɔu have it's about time to show it. If you can borrow some ɛnt's hat in the audience, and make a lot of customers for ı idle stock of shoes come out of it, you'd better spiel. The ɔys have all laid in enough foot-wear to last 'em ten years; ıd there's nothing doing in the shoe store but dolcy far ɛnty. I just came by there. Your venerable victim was stand-g in the door, gazing through his specs at the bare toes pass-g by his emporium. The natives here have got the true tistic temperament. Me and Clancy took eighteen tintypes ıis morning in two hours. There's been but one pair of shoes ld all day. Blanchard went in and bought a pair of fur-lined ɔuse-slippers because he thought he saw Miss Hemstetter go to the store. I saw him throw the slippers into the lagoon terwards."

"There's a Mobile fruit steamer coming in to-morrow or ɛxt day," said Johnny. "We can't do anything until then."

"What are you going to do—try to create a demand?"

"Political economy isn't your strong point," said the consul, ıpudently. "You can't create a demand. But you can create necessity for a demand. That's what I am going to do."

Two weeks after the consul sent his cable, a fruit steamer ɔught him a huge, mysterious brown bale of some unknown ɔmmodity. Johnny's influence with the custom-house people ıs sufficiently strong for him to get the goods turned over him without the usual inspection. He had the bale taken the consulate and snugly stowed in the back room.

That night he ripped open a corner of it and took out a ındful of the cockleburrs. He examined them with the care ith which a warrior examines his arms before he goes forth battle for his lady-love and life. The burrs were the ripe ıgust product, as hard as filberts, and bristling with spines

as tough and sharp as needles. Johnny whistled softly a little tune, and went out to find Billy Keogh.

Later in the night, when Coralio was steeped in slumber he and Billy went forth into the deserted streets with their coats bulging like balloons. All up and down the Calle Grande they went, sowing the sharp burrs carefully in the sand, along the narrow sidewalks, in every foot of grass between the silent houses. And then they took the side streets and byways, missing none. No place where the foot of man woman or child might fall was slighted. Many trips they made to and from the prickly hoard. And then, nearly at the dawn they laid themselves down to rest calmly, as great generals do after planning a victory according to the revised tactics, and slept, knowing that they had sowed with the accuracy of Satan sowing tares and the perseverance of Paul planting.

With the rising sun came the purveyors of fruits and meats and arranged their wares in and around the little market house. At one end of the town near the seashore the market house stood; and the sowing of the burrs had not been carried that far. The dealers waited long past the hour when their sales usually began. None came to buy. "*Qué hay?*" they began to exclaim, one to another.

At their accustomed time, from every 'dobe and palm hut and grass-thatched shack and dim *patio* glided women—black women, brown women, lemon-colored women, women dusky and yellow and tawny. They were the marketers starting to purchase the family supply of cassava, plantains, meat, fowls and tortillas. Décolleté they were and bare-armed and bare-footed, with a single skirt reaching below the knee. Stolid and ox-eyed, they stepped from their doorways into the narrow paths or upon the soft grass of the streets.

The first to emerge uttered ambiguous squeals, and raised one foot quickly. Another step and they sat down, with shrill cries of alarm, to pick at the new and painful insects that had

ung them upon the feet. "*Qué picadores diablos!*" they reeched to one another across the narrow ways. Some tried e grass instead of the paths, but there they were also stung id bitten by the strange little prickly balls. They plumped own in the grass, and added their lamentations to those of eir sisters in the sandy paths. All through the town was eard the plaint of the feminine jabber. The venders in the arket still wondered why no customers came.

Then men, lords of the earth, came forth. They, too, began hop, to dance, to limp, and to curse. They stood stranded id foolish, or stooped to pluck at the scourge that attacked eir feet and ankles. Some loudly proclaimed the pest to be oisonous spiders of an unknown species.

And then the children ran out for their morning romp. And ow to the uproar was added the howls of limping infants id cockleburred childhood. Every minute the advancing day ought forth fresh victims.

Doña Maria Castillas y Buenventura de las Casas stepped om her honored doorway, as was her daily custom, to pro- re fresh bread from the *panadería* across the street. She was ad in a skirt of flowered yellow satin, a chemise of ruffled ien, and wore a purple mantilla from the looms of Spain. er lemon-tinted feet, alas! were bare. Her progress was ma- stic, for were not her ancestors hidalgos of Aragon? Three eps she made across the velvety grass, and set her aristocratic le upon a bunch of Johnny's burrs. Doña Maria Castillas y ienventura de las Casas emitted a yowl even as a wildcat. urning about, she fell upon hands and knees, and crawled ay, like a beast of the field she crawled back to her honorable oor-sill.

Don Señor Ildefonso Federico Valdazar, *Juez de la Paz*, eighing twenty stone, attempted to convey his bulk to the *alquería* at the corner of the plaza in order to assuage his atutinal thirst. The first plunge of his unshod foot into the

cool grass struck a concealed mine. Don Ildefonso fell like a crumpled cathedral, crying out that he had been fatally bitten by a deadly scorpion. Everywhere were the shoeless citizens hopping, stumbling, limping, and picking from their feet the venomous insects that had come in a single night to harass them.

The first to perceive the remedy was Estebán Delgado, the barber, a man of travel and education. Sitting upon a stone he plucked burrs from his toes, and made oration:

"Behold, my friend, these bugs of the devil! I know them well. They soar through the skies in swarms like pigeons. These are the dead ones that fell during the night. In Yucatan I have seen them as large as oranges. Yes! There they hiss like serpents, and have wings like bats. It is the shoes—the shoes that one needs! *Zapatos—zapatos para mí!*"

Estebán hobbled to Mr. Hemstetter's store, and bought shoes. Coming out, he swaggered down the street with impunity, reviling loudly the bugs of the devil. The suffering ones sat up or stood upon one foot and beheld the immune barber. Men, women, and children took up the cry: "*Zapatos, zapatos!*"

The necessity for the demand had been created. The demand followed. That day Mr. Hemstetter sold three hundred pairs of shoes.

"It is really surprising," he said to Johnny, who came up in the evening to help him straighten out the stock, "how trade is picking up. Yesterday I made but three sales."

"I told you they'd whoop things up when they got started," said the consul.

"I think I shall order a dozen more cases of goods, to keep the stock up," said Mr. Hemstetter, beaming through his spectacles.

"I wouldn't send in any orders yet," advised Johnny. "Wait till you see how the trade holds up."

Each night Johnny and Keogh sowed the crop that grew
llars by day. At the end of ten days two-thirds of the stock
shoes had been sold; and the stock of cockleburrs was ex-
usted. Johnny cabled to Pink Dawson for another 500
unds, paying twenty cents per pound as before. Mr. Hem-
etter carefully made up an order for $1,500 worth of shoes
om Northern firms. Johnny hung about the store until this
der was ready for the mail, and succeeded in destroying it
efore it reached the post-office.

That night he took Rosine under the mango tree by Good-
in's porch, and confessed everything. She looked him in the
e, and said: "You are a very wicked man. Father and I will
back home. You say it was a joke? I think it is a very se-
ous matter."

But at the end of half an hour's argument the conversation
d been turned upon a different subject. The two were con-
dering the respective merits of pale blue and pink wall paper
ith which the old colonial mansion of the Atwoods in Dales-
rg was to be decorated after the wedding.

On the next morning Johnny confessed to Mr. Hemstetter.
he shoe merchant put on his spectacles, and said through
em: "You strike me as being a most extraordinary young
amp. If I had not managed this enterprise with good busi-
ss judgment my entire stock of goods might have been a
mplete loss. Now, how do you propose to dispose of the
st of it?"

When the second invoice of cockleburrs arrived Johnny
aded them and the remainder of the shoes into a schooner,
d sailed down the coast to Alazan.

There, in the same dark and diabolical manner, he repeated
s success; and came back with a bag of money and not so
uch as a shoestring.

And then he besought his great uncle of the waving goatee
d starred vest to accept his resignation, for the lotus no

longer lured him. He hankered for the spinach and cress o Dalesburg.

The services of Mr. William Terence Keogh as acting con sul, *pro tem.*, were suggested and accepted, and Johnny sailed with the Hemstetters back to his native shores.

Three days after Johnny's departure, two small schooner appeared off Coralio. After some delay a boat put off from one of them, and brought a sunburned young man ashore This young man had a shrewd and calculating eye; and h gazed with amazement at the strange things that he saw. H found on the beach some one who directed him to the con sul's office; and thither he made his way at a nervous gait

Keogh was sprawled in the official chair, drawing caricatures of his uncle's head on an official pad of paper. He looked up at his visitor.

"Where's Johnny Atwood?" inquired the sunburned youn man, in a business tone.

"Gone," said Keogh, working carefully at Uncle Sam's neck tie.

"That's just like him," remarked the nut-brown one, leanin against the table. "He always was a fellow to gallivant aroun instead of 'tending to business. Will he be in soon?"

"Don't think so," said Keogh, after a fair amount of de liberation.

"I s'pose he's out at some of his tomfoolery," conjecture the visitor, in a tone of virtuous conviction. "Johnny neve would stick to anything long enough to succeed. I wonde how he manages to run his business here, and never be 'roun to look after it."

"I'm looking after the business just now," admitted the *pr tem.* consul.

"Are you—then, say!—where's the factory?"

"What factory?" asked Keogh, with a mildly polite interes

"Why, the factory where they use them cockleburrs. Lo

nows what they use 'em for, anyway! I've got the basements
f both them ships out there loaded with 'em. I'll give you a
argain in this lot. I've had every man, woman, and child
ound Dalesburg that wasn't busy pickin' 'em for a month.
hired these ships to bring 'em over. Everybody thought I
as crazy. Now, you can have this lot for fifteen cents a
ound, delivered on land. And if you want more I guess old
labam' can come up to the demand. Johnny told me when
e left home that if he struck anything down here that there
as any money in he'd let me in on it. Shall I drive the ships
and hitch?"

A look of supreme, almost incredulous, delight dawned in
eogh's ruddy countenance. He dropped his pencil. His eyes
rned upon the sunburned young man with joy in them min-
ed with fear lest his ecstasy should prove a dream.

"For God's sake, tell me," said Keogh, earnestly, "are you
ink Pawson?"

"My name is Pinkney Dawson," said the cornerer of the
ckleburr market.

Billy Keogh slid rapturously and gently from his chair to
s favorite strip of matting on the floor.

There were not many sounds in Coralio on that sultry after-
on. Among those that were may be mentioned a noise of
raptured and unrighteous laughter from a prostrate Irish-
merican, while a sunburned young man, with a shrewd eye,
oked on him with wonder and amazement. Also the "tramp,
amp, tramp" of many well-shod feet in the streets outside.
lso the lonesome wash of the waves that beat along the his-
ric shores of the Spanish Main.

The Hiding of Black Bill

A LANK, strong, red-faced man with a Wellington beak and small, fiery eyes tempered by flaxen lashes, sat on the station platform at Los Pinos swinging his legs to and fro. At his side sat another man, fat, melancholy, and seedy, who seemed to be his friend. They had the appearance of men to whom life had appeared as a reversible coat—seamy on both sides.

"Ain't seen you in about four years, Ham," said the seedy man. "Which way you been travelling?"

"Texas," said the red-faced man. "It was too cold in Alaska for me. And I found it warm in Texas. I'll tell you about one hot spell I went through there.

"One morning I steps off the International at a water-tank and lets it go on without me. 'Twas a ranch country, and fuller of spitehouses than New York City. Only out there they build 'em twenty miles away so you can't smell what they've got for dinner, instead of running 'em up two inches from their neighbors' windows.

"There wasn't any roads in sight, so I footed it 'cross country. The grass was shoe-top deep, and the mesquite timber looked just like a peach orchard. It was so much like a gentleman's private estate that every minute you expected a kennelful of bulldogs to run out and bite you. But I must have walked twenty miles before I came in sight of a ranch-house. It was a little one, about as big as an elevated railroad station.

"There was a little man in a white shirt and brown overalls and pink handkerchief around his neck rolling cigarettes under a tree in front of the door.

" 'Greetings,' says I. 'Any refreshments, welcome, emoluments, or even work for a comparative stranger?'

" 'Oh, come in,' says he, in a refined tone. 'Sit down on that ool, please. I didn't hear your horse coming.'

" 'He isn't near enough yet,' says I. 'I walked. I don't want be a burden, but I wonder if you have three or four gallons water handy.'

" 'You do look pretty dusty,' says he; 'but our bathing ar-ngements——'

" 'It's a drink I want,' says I. 'Never mind the dust that's the outside.'

"He gets me a dipper of water out of a red jar hanging , and then goes on:

" 'Do you want work?'

" 'For a time,' says I. 'This is a rather quiet section of the untry, isn't it?'

" 'It is,' says he. 'Sometimes—so I have been told—one sees human being pass for weeks at a time. I've been here only month. I bought the ranch from an old settler who wanted move farther west.'

" 'It suits me,' says I. 'Quiet and retirement are good for a an sometimes. And I need a job. I can tend bar, salt mines, cture, float stock, do a little middle-weight slugging, and ay the piano.'

" 'Can you herd sheep?' asks the little ranchman.

" 'Do you mean *have* I heard sheep?' says I.

" 'Can you herd 'em—take charge of a flock of 'em?' says he.

" 'Oh,' says I, 'now I understand. You mean chase 'em ound and bark at 'em like collie dogs. Well, I might,' says 'I've never exactly done any sheep-herding, but I've often en 'em from car windows masticating daisies, and they don't ok dangerous.'

"'I'm short a herder,' says the ranchman. 'You never can epend on the Mexicans. I've only got two flocks. You may ke out my bunch of muttons—there are only eight hundred 'em—in the morning, if you like. The pay is twelve dollars

a month and your rations furnished. You camp in a tent on the prairie with your sheep. You do your own cooking, but wood and water are brought to your camp. It's an easy job.'

"'I'm on,' says I. 'I'll take the job even if I have to garland my brow and hold on to a crook and wear a loose effect and play on a pipe like the shepherds do in pictures.'

"So the next morning the little ranchman helps me drive the flock of muttons from the corral to about two miles out and let 'em graze on a little hillside on the prairie. He gives me a lot of instructions about not letting bunches of them stray off from the herd, and driving 'em down to a water-hole to drink at noon.

"'I'll bring out your tent and camping outfit and rations in the buckboard before night,' says he.

"'Fine,' says I. 'And don't forget the rations. Nor the camping outfit. And be sure to bring the tent. Your name's Zolli coffer, ain't it?'

"'My name,' says he, 'is Henry Ogden.'

"'All right, Mr. Ogden,' says I. 'Mine is Mr. Percival Sain Clair.'

"I herded sheep for five days on the Rancho Chiquito; and then the wool entered my soul. That getting next to Natur certainly got next to me. I was lonesomer than Crusoe's goat I've seen a lot of persons more entertaining as companion than those sheep were. I'd drive 'em to the corral and pe 'em every evening, and then cook my cornbread and mutto and coffee, and lie down in a tent the size of a tablecloth and listen to the coyotes and whippoor-wills singing aroun the camp.

"The fifth evening, after I had coralled my costly but un congenial muttons, I walked over to the ranch-house an stepped in the door.

"'Mr. Ogden,' says I, 'you and me have got to get sociable Sheep are all very well to dot the landscape and furnish eigh

ollar cotton suitings for man, but for table-talk and fireside ompanions they rank along with five-o'clock teazers. If ou've got a deck of cards, or a parcheesi outfit, or a game of uthors, get 'em out, and let's get on a mental basis. I've got o do something in an intellectual line, if it's only to knock omebody's brains out.'

"This Henry Ogden was a peculiar kind of ranchman. He ore finger-rings and a big gold watch and careful neckties. nd his face was calm, and his nose-spectacles was kept very iiny. I saw once, in Muscogee, an outlaw hung for murdering x men, who was a dead ringer for him. But I knew a preacher i Arkansas that you would have taken to be his brother. I idn't care much for him either way; what I wanted was some llowship and communion with holy saints or lost sinners—nything sheepless would do.

" 'Well, Saint Clair,' says he, laying down the book he was eading, 'I guess it must be pretty lonesome for you at first. nd I don't deny that it's monotonous for me. Are you sure ou corralled your sheep so they won't stray out?'

" 'They're shut up as tight as the jury of a millionaire murerer,' says I. 'And I'll be back with them long before they'll eed their trained nurse.'

"So Ogden digs up a deck of cards, and we play casino. fter five days and nights of my sheep-camp it was like a toot n Broadway. When I caught big casino I felt as excited as I had made a million in Trinity. And when H. O. loosened p a little and told the story about the lady in the Pullman ar I laughed for five minutes.

"That showed what a comparative thing life is. A man may e so much that he'd be bored to turn his head to look at a 3,000,000 fire or Joe Weber or the Adriatic Sea. But let him erd sheep for a spell, and you'll see him splitting his ribs ughing at 'Curfew Shall Not Ring To-night,' or really enoying himself playing cards with ladies.

"By-and-by Ogden gets out a decanter of Bourbon, and there is a total eclipse of sheep.

"'Do you remember reading in the papers about a month ago,' says he, 'about a train hold-up on the M. K. & T.? The express agent was shot through the shoulder and about $15,000 in currency taken. And it's said that only one man did the job.'

"'Seems to me I do,' says I. 'But such things happen so often they don't linger long in the human Texas mind. Did they overtake, overhaul, seize, or lay hands upon the despoiler?'

"'He escaped,' says Ogden. 'And I was just reading in a paper to-day that the officers have tracked him down into this part of the country. It seems the bills the robbers got were all the first issue of currency to the Second National Bank of Espinosa City. And so they've followed the trail where they've been spent, and it leads this way.'

"Ogden pours out some more Bourbon, and shoves me the bottle.

"'I imagine,' says I, after ingurgitating another modicum of the royal booze, 'that it wouldn't be at all a disingenuous idea for a train-robber to run down into this part of the country to hide for a spell. A sheep-ranch, now,' says I, 'would be the finest kind of a place. Who'd ever expect to find such a desperate character among these song-birds and muttons and wild flowers? And, by the way,' says I, kind of looking H. Ogden over, 'was there any description mentioned to this single-handed terror? Was his lineaments or height and thickness or teeth fillings or style of habiliments set forth in print?"

"'Why, no,' says Ogden; 'because they say nobody got a good sight of him because he wore a mask. But they know it was a train-robber called Black Bill, because he always works alone and because he dropped a handkerchief in the express car that had his name on it.'

"'All right,' says I. 'I approve of Black Bill's retreat to the eep-ranges. I guess they won't find him.'

"'There's one thousand dollars' reward for his capture,' 's Ogden.

"'I don't need that kind of money,' says I, looking Mr. eepman straight in the eye. 'The twelve dollars a month u pay me is enough. I need a rest, and I can save up until et enough to pay my fare to Texarkana, where my widowed ther lives. If Black Bill,' I goes on, looking significantly at gden, 'was to have come down this way—say, a month ago—d bought a little sheep-ranch and——'

"'Stop,' says Ogden, getting out of his chair and looking etty vicious. 'Do you mean to insinuate——'

"'Nothing,' says I; 'no insinuations. I'm stating a hypoder-cal case. I say, if Black Bill had come down here and bought sheep-ranch and hired me to Little-Boy-Blue 'em and ated me square and friendly, as you've done, he'd never ve anything to fear from me. A man is a man, regardless any complications he may have with sheep or railroad ins. Now you know where I stand.'

'Ogden looks black as camp-coffee for nine seconds, and en he laughs, amused.

"'You'll do, Saint Clair,' says he. 'If I *was* Black Bill I uldn't be afraid to trust you. Let's have a game or two of en-up to-night. That is, if you don't mind playing with a in-robber.'

"'I've told you,' says I, 'my oral sentiments, and there's no ings to 'em.'

'While I was shuffling after the first hand, I asks Ogden, as he idea was a kind of a casualty, where he was from.

"'Oh,' says he, 'from the Mississippi Valley.'

"'That's a nice little place,' says I. 'I've often stopped over ere. But didn't you find the sheets a little damp and the

food poor? Now, I hail,' says I, 'from the Pacific Slope. Eve put up there?'

"'Too draughty,' says Ogden. 'But if you're ever in th Middle West just mention my name, and you'll get foot warmers and dripped coffee.'

"'Well,' says I, 'I wasn't exactly fishing for your private tele phone number and the middle name of your aunt that carrie off that Cumberland Presbyterian minister. It don't matter. just want you to know you are safe in the hands of you shepherd. Now, don't play hearts on spades, and don't ge nervous.'

"'Still harping,' says Ogden, laughing again. 'Don't yo suppose that if I was Black Bill and thought you suspecte me, I'd put a Winchester bullet into you and stop my nervous ness if I had any?'

"'Not any,' says I. 'A man who's got the nerve to hol up a train single-handed wouldn't do a trick like that. I'v knocked about enough to know that them are the kind of me who put a value on a friend. Not that I can claim being friend of yours, Mr. Ogden,' says I, 'being only your sheep herder; but under more expeditious circumstances we migh have been.'

"'Forget the sheep temporarily, I beg,' says Ogden, 'an cut for deal.'

"About four days afterwards, while my muttons was noon ing on the water-hole and I deep in the interstices of makin a pot of coffee, up rides softly on the grass a mysterious perso in the garb of the being he wished to represent. He wa dressed somewhere between a Kansas City detective, Buffal Bill, and the town dog-catcher of Baton Rouge. His chin an eye wasn't moulded on fighting lines, so I knew he was onl a scout.

"'Herdin' sheep?' he asks me.

"'Well,' says I, 'to a man of your evident gumptional en

wments, I wouldn't have the nerve to state that I am en-
ged in decorating old bronzes or oiling bicycle sprockets.'
' 'You don't talk or look like a sheep-herder to me,' says he.
' 'But you talk like what you look like to me,' says I.
'And then he asks me who I was working for, and I shows
n Rancho Chiquito, two miles away, in the shadow of a
v hill, and he tells me he's a deputy sheriff.
' 'There's a train-robber called Black Bill supposed to be
newhere in these parts,' says the scout. 'He's been traced
far as San Antonio, and may be farther. Have you seen or
ard of any strangers around here during the past month?'
' 'I have not,' says I, 'except a report of one over at the
exican quarters of Loomis' ranch, on the Frio.'
' 'What do you know about him?' asks the deputy.
' 'He's three days old,' says I.
' 'What kind of a looking man is the man you work for?'
asks. 'Does old George Ramey own this place yet? He's
n sheep here for the last ten years, but never had no success.'
' 'The old man has sold out and gone West,' I tells him.
nother sheep-fancier bought him out about a month ago.'
' 'What kind of a looking man is he?' asks the deputy again.
' 'Oh,' says I, 'a big, fat kind of a Dutchman with long
iskers and blue specs. I don't think he knows a sheep from
round-squirrel. I guess old George soaked him pretty well
the deal,' says I.
'After indulging himself in a lot more non-communicative
ormation and two thirds of my dinner, the deputy rides
ay.
'That night I mentions the matter to Ogden.
' 'They're drawing the tendrils of the octopus around Black
l,' says I. And then I told him about the deputy sheriff,
l how I'd described him to the deputy, and what the dep
said about the matter.
' 'Oh, well,' says Ogden, 'let's don't borrow any of Black

Bill's troubles. We've a few of our own. Get the Bourbon out of the cupboard and we'll drink to his health—unless,' says he, with his little cackling laugh, 'you're prejudiced against train-robbers.'

"'I'll drink,' says I, 'to any man who's a friend to a friend. And I believe that Black Bill,' I goes on, 'would be that. So here's to Black Bill, and may he have good luck.'

"And both of us drank.

"About two weeks later comes shearing-time. The sheep had to be driven up to the ranch, and a lot of frowzy-headed Mexicans would snip the fur off them with back-action scissors. So the afternoon before the barbers were to come I hustled my underdone muttons over the hill, across the dell down by the winding brook, and up to the ranch-house, where I penned 'em in a corral and bade 'em my nightly adieus.

"I went from there to the ranch-house. I find H. Ogden Esquire, lying asleep on his little cot bed. I guess he had been overcome by anti-insomnia or diswakefulness or some of the diseases peculiar to the sheep business. His mouth and vest were open, and he breathed like a second-hand bicycle pump. I looked at him and gave vent to just a few musings. 'Imperial Cæsar,' says I, 'asleep in such a way, might shut his mouth and keep the wind away.'

"A man asleep is certainly a sight to make angels weep. What good is all his brain, muscle, backing, nerve, influence and family connections? He's at the mercy of his enemies, and more so of his friends. And he's about as beautiful as a cab horse leaning against the Metropolitan Opera House at 12:30 A.M. dreaming of the plains of Arabia. Now, a woman asleep you regard as different. No matter how she looks, you know it's better for all hands for her to be that way.

"Well, I took a drink of Bourbon and one for Ogden, and started in to be comfortable while he was taking his nap. He had some books on his table on indigenous subjects, such as

an and drainage and physical culture—and some tobacco, ich seemed more to the point.

'After I'd smoked a few, and listened to the sartorial athing of H. O., I happened to look out the window to- rd the shearing-pens, where there was a kind of a road com- up from a kind of a road across a kind of a creek farther ay.

'I saw five men riding up to the house. All of 'em carried ns across their saddles, and among 'em was the deputy that l talked to me at my camp.

'They rode up careful, in open formation, with their guns dy. I set apart with my eye the one I opinionated to be the ss muck-raker of this law-and-order cavalry.

'Good-evening, gents,' says I. 'Won't you 'light and tie ır horses?'

'The boss rides up close, and swings his gun over till the ening in it seems to cover my whole front elevation.

'Don't you move your hands none,' says he, 'till you and indulge in a adequate amount of necessary conversation.'

'I will not,' says I. 'I am no deaf-mute, and therefore will have to disobey your injunctions in replying.'

'We are on the lookout,' says he, 'for Black Bill, the man t held up the Katy for $15,000 in May. We are searching ranches and everybody on 'em. What is your name, and at do you do on this ranch?'

'Captain,' says I, 'Percival Saint Clair is my occupation, l my name is sheep-herder. I've got my flock of veals—no, ttons—penned here to-night. The searchers are coming to- rrow to give them a haircut—with baa-a-rum, I suppose.'

'Where's the boss of this ranch?' the captain of the gang s me.

'Wait just a minute, cap'n,' says I. 'Wasn't there a kind of eward offered for the capture of this desperate character have referred to in your preamble?'

"'There's a thousand dollars' reward offered,' says the ca
tain, 'but it's for his capture and conviction. There don't see
to be no provision made for an informer.'

"'It looks like it might rain in a day or so,' says I, in a tire
way, looking up at the cerulean blue sky.

"'If you know anything about the locality, disposition,
secretiveness of this here Black Bill,' says he, in a severe di
lect, 'you are amiable to the law in not reporting it.'

"'I heard a fence-rider say,' says I, in a desultory kind
voice, 'that a Mexican told a cowboy named Jake over
Pidgin's store on the Nueces that he heard that Black Bill ha
been seen in Matamoras by a sheepman's cousin two wee
ago.'

"'Tell you what I'll do, Tight Mouth,' says the capta
after looking me over for bargains. 'If you put us on so we ca
scoop Black Bill, I'll pay you a hundred dollars out of my ow
—out of our own—pockets. That's liberal,' says he. 'You ain
entitled to anything. Now, what do you say?'

"'Cash down now?' I ask.

"The captain has a sort of discussion with his helpmate
and they all produce the contents of their pockets for analys
Out of the general results they figured up $102.30 in cash an
$31 worth of plug tobacco.

"'Come nearer, capitan meeo,' says I, 'and listen.' He
did.

"'I am mighty poor and low down in the world,' says
'I am working for twelve dollars a month trying to keep a l
of animals together whose only thought seems to be to g
asunder. Although,' says I, 'I regard myself as some bett
than the State of South Dakota, it's a come-down to a m
who has heretofore regarded sheep only in the form of cho
I'm pretty far reduced in the world on account of foiled a
bitions and rum and a kind of cocktail they make along t
P. R. R. all the way from Scranton to Cincinnati—dry g

ench vermouth, one squeeze of a lime, and a good dash of
ange bitters. If you're ever up that way, don't fail to let one
you. And, again,' says I, 'I have never yet went back on a
end. I've stayed by 'em when they had plenty, and when
versity's overtaken me I've never forsook 'em.

"'But,' I goes on, 'this is not exactly the case of a friend.
velve dollars a month is only bowing-acquaintance money.
d I do not consider brown beans and cornbread the food
friendship. I am a poor man,' says I, 'and I have a widowed
ther in Texarkana. You will find Black Bill,' says I, 'lying
eep in this house on a cot in the room to your right. He's
e man you want, as I know from his words and conversation.
e was in a way a friend,' I explains, 'and if I was the man I
ce was the entire product of the mines of Gondola would
t have tempted me to betray him. But,' says I, 'every week
f of the beans was wormy, and not nigh enough wood in
np.

'"Better go in careful, gentlemen,' says I. 'He seems im-
ient at times, and when you think of his late professional
suits one would look for abrupt actions if he was come
on sudden.'

"So the whole posse unmounts and ties their horses, and
limbers their ammunition and equipments, and tiptoes
o the house. And I follows, like Delilah when she set the
ilip Steins on to Samson.

"The leader of the posse shakes Ogden and wakes him up.
d then he jumps up and two more of the reward-hunters
b him. Ogden was mighty tough with all his slimness, and
es 'em as neat a single-footed tussle against odds as I ever

'"What does this mean?' he says, after they had him down.
'"You're scooped in, Mr. Black Bill,' says the captain.
at's all.'
'"It's an outrage,' says H. Ogden, madder yet.

"'It was,' says the peace-and-good-will man. 'The Kat wasn't bothering you, and there's a law against monkeyin with express packages.'

"And he sits on H. Ogden's stomach and goes through h pockets symptomatically and careful.

"'I'll make you perspire for this,' says Ogden, perspirin some himself. 'I can prove who I am.'

"'So can I,' says the captain, as he draws from H. Ogden inside coat-pocket a handful of new bills of the Secon National Bank of Espinosa City. 'Your regular engrave Tuesdays-and-Fridays visiting-card wouldn't have a loud voice in proclaiming your indemnity than this here currenc You can get up now and prepare to go with us and expatriat your sins.'

"H. Ogden gets up and fixes his necktie. He says no mo after they have taken the money off of him.

"'A well-greased idea,' says the sheriff captain, admirin 'to slip off down here and buy a little sheep-ranch where th hand of man is seldom heard. It was the slickest hide-out ever see,' says the captain.

"So one of the men goes to the shearing-pen and hunts u the other herder, a Mexican they call John Sallies, and h saddles Ogden's horse, and the sheriffs all ride up clo around him with their guns in hand, ready to take their pri oner to town.

"Before starting, Ogden puts the ranch in John Sallie hands and gives him orders about the shearing and where graze the sheep, just as if he intended to be back in a fe days. And a couple of hours afterward one Percival Sai Clair, an ex-sheep-herder of the Rancho Chiquito, might ha been seen, with a hundred and nine dollars—wages and bloo money—in his pocket, riding south on another horse belon ing to said ranch."

The red-faced man paused and listened. The whistle of

ning freight-train sounded far away among the low hills. The fat, seedy man at his side sniffed, and shook his frowzy ad slowly and disparagingly.

"What is it, Snipy?" asked the other. "Got the blues again?"

"No, I ain't," said the seedy one, sniffing again. "But I don't e your talk. You and me have been friends, off and on, for een year; and I never yet knew or heard of you giving any- ly up to the law—not no one. And here was a man whose eratus you had et and at whose table you had played games cards—if casino can be so called. And yet you inform him the law and take money for it. It never was like you, I say."

"This H. Ogden," resumed the red-faced man, "through a yer, proved himself free by alibis and other legal terminali- , as I so heard afterward. He never suffered no harm. He me favors, and I hated to hand him over."

"How about the bills they found in his pocket?" asked the dy man.

"I put 'em there," said the red-faced man, "while he was eep, when I saw the posse riding up. I was Black Bill. Look , Snipy, here she comes! We'll board her on the bumpers en she takes water."

The Duplicity of Hargraves

HEN Major Pendleton Talbot, of Mobile, sir, and his daugh- Miss Lydia Talbot, came to Washington to reside, they ected for a boarding place a house that stood fifty yards k from one of the quietest avenues. It was an old-fashioned ck building, with a portico upheld by tall white pillars. The d was shaded by stately locusts and elms, and a catalpa e in season rained its pink and white blossoms upon the

grass. Rows of high box bushes lined the fence and walks. It was the Southern style and aspect of the place that pleased the eyes of the Talbots.

In this pleasant, private boarding house they engaged rooms, including a study for Major Talbot, who was adding the finishing chapters to his book, "Anecdotes and Reminiscences of the Alabama Army, Bench, and Bar."

Major Talbot was of the old, old South. The present day had little interest or excellence in his eyes. His mind lived in that period before the Civil War, when the Talbots owned thousands of acres of fine cotton land and the slaves to till them; when the family mansion was the scene of princely hospitality, and drew its guests from the aristocracy of the South. Out of that period he had brought all of its old pride and scruples of honor, and antiquated and punctilious politeness and (you would think) its wardrobe.

Such clothes were surely never made within fifty years. The major was tall, but whenever he made that wonderful, archaic genuflexion he called a bow, the corners of his frock coat swept the floor. That garment was a surprise even to Washington, which has long ago ceased to shy at the frocks and broad brimmed hats of Southern congressmen. One of the boarders christened it a "Father Hubbard," and it certainly was high in the waist and full in the skirt.

But the major, with all his queer clothes, his immense area of plaited, ravelling shirt bosom, and the little black string tie with the bow always slipping on one side, both was smiled at and liked in Mrs. Vardeman's select boarding house. Some of the young department clerks would often "string him," as they called it, getting him started upon the subject dearest to him—the traditions and history of his beloved Southland. During his talks he would quote freely from the "Anecdotes and Reminiscences." But they were very careful not to let him see their designs, for in spite of his sixty-eight years, he could

ke the boldest of them uncomfortable under the steady
ird of his piercing gray eyes.

Miss Lydia was a plump, little old maid of thirty-five, with
oothly drawn, tightly twisted hair that made her look still
er. Old fashioned, too, she was; but ante-bellum glory did
radiate from her as it did from the major. She possessed
rifty common sense; and it was she who handled the fi-
ces of the family, and met all comers when there were
s to pay. The major regarded board bills and wash bills
contemptible nuisances. They kept coming in so persist-
y and so often. Why, the major wanted to know, could
not be filed and paid in a lump sum at some convenient
od—say when the "Anecdotes and Reminiscences" had
n published and paid for? Miss Lydia would calmly go on
n her sewing and say, "We'll pay as we go as long as the
ney lasts, and then perhaps they'll have to lump it."

Most of Mrs. Vardeman's boarders were away during the
being nearly all department clerks and business men; but
e was one of them who was about the house a great deal
n morning to night. This was a young man named Henry
okins Hargraves—every one in the house addressed him by
full name—who was engaged at one of the popular vaude-
e theatres. Vaudeville has risen to such a respectable plane
he last few years, and Mr. Hargraves was such a modest
well-mannered person, that Mrs. Vardeman could find
objection to enrolling him upon her list of boarders.

t the theatre Hargraves was known as an all-round dialect
edian, having a large repertoire of German, Irish, Swede,
black-face specialties. But Mr. Hargraves was ambitious,
often spoke of his great desire to succeed in legitimate
edy.

his young man appeared to conceive a strong fancy for
or Talbot. Whenever that gentleman would begin his
thern reminiscences, or repeat some of the liveliest of the

anecdotes, Hargraves could always be found, the most attentive among his listeners.

For a time the major showed an inclination to discourage the advances of the "play actor," as he privately termed him, but soon the young man's agreeable manner and indubitable appreciation of the old gentleman's stories completely won him over.

It was not long before the two were like old chums. The major set apart each afternoon to read to him the manuscript of his book. During the anecdotes Hargraves never failed to laugh at exactly the right point. The major was moved to declare to Miss Lydia one day that young Hargraves possessed remarkable perception and a gratifying respect for the old régime. And when it came to talking of those old days—if Major Talbot liked to talk, Mr. Hargraves was entranced to listen.

Like almost all old people who talk of the past, the major loved to linger over details. In describing the splendid, almost royal, days of the old planters, he would hesitate until he had recalled the name of the Negro who held his horse, or the exact date of certain minor happenings, or the number of bales of cotton raised in such a year; but Hargraves never grew impatient or lost interest. On the contrary, he would advance questions on a variety of subjects connected with the life of that time, and he never failed to extract ready replies.

The fox hunts; the 'possum suppers; the hoe downs and jubilees in the Negro quarters; the banquets in the plantation house hall, when invitations went for fifty miles around; the occasional feuds with the neighboring gentry; the major's duel with Rathbone Culbertson about Kitty Chalmers, who afterward married a Thwaite of South Carolina; and private yacht races for fabulous sums on Mobile Bay; the quaint beliefs, improvident habits, and loyal virtues of the old slaves—all these were subjects that held both the major and Hargraves absorbed for hours at a time.

ometimes, at night, when the young man would be com- upstairs to his room after his turn at the theatre was over, major would appear at the door of his study and beckon ily to him. Going in, Hargraves would find a little table with a decanter, sugar bowl, fruit, and a big bunch of h green mint.

It occurred to me," the major would begin—he was always emonious—"that perhaps you might have found your ies at the—at your place of occupation—sufficiently ardu- to enable you, Mr. Hargraves, to appreciate what the poet ht well have had in his mind when he wrote, 'tired Na- e's sweet restorer,'—one of our Southern juleps."

t was a fascination to Hargraves to watch him make it. He k rank among artists when he began, and he never varied process. With what delicacy he bruised the mint; with it exquisite nicety he estimated the ingredients; with what citous care he capped the compound with the scarlet fruit ving against the dark green fringe! And then the hospi- ty and grace with which he offered it, after the selected straws had been plunged into its tinkling depths!

fter about four months in Washington, Miss Lydia dis- ered one morning that they were almost without money. e "Anecdotes and Reminiscences" was completed, but lishers had not jumped at the collected gems of Alabama se and wit. The rental of a small house which they still ned in Mobile was two months in arrears. Their board ney for the month would be due in three days. Miss Lydia ed her father to a consultation.

No money?" said he with a surprised look. "It is quite an- ing to be called on so frequently for these petty sums. lly, I——"

he major searched his pockets. He found only a two- ar bill, which he returned to his vest pocket.

I must attend to this at once, Lydia," he said. "Kindly get

me my umbrella and I will go down town immediately. Th congressman from our district, General Fulghum, assured m some days ago that he would use his influence to get my boo published at an early date. I will go to his hotel at once an see what arrangement has been made."

With a sad little smile Miss Lydia watched him button h "Father Hubbard" and depart, pausing at the door, as he a ways did, to bow profoundly.

That evening, at dark, he returned. It seemed that Co gressman Fulghum had seen the publisher who had the m jor's manuscript for reading. That person had said that if th anecdotes, etc., were carefully pruned down about one hal in order to eliminate the sectional and class prejudice wit which the book was dyed from end to end, he might consid its publication.

The major was in a white heat of anger, but regained h equanimity, according to his code of manners, as soon as h was in Miss Lydia's presence.

"We must have money," said Miss Lydia, with a little wri kle above her nose. "Give me the two dollars, and I will tel graph to Uncle Ralph for some to-night."

The major drew a small envelope from his upper ve pocket and tossed it on the table.

"Perhaps it was injudicious," he said mildly, "but the su was so merely nominal that I bought tickets to the theat to-night. It's a new war drama, Lydia. I thought you wou be pleased to witness its first production in Washington. am told that the South has very fair treatment in the play. confess I should like to see the performance myself."

Miss Lydia threw up her hands in silent despair.

Still, as the tickets were bought, they might as well be use So that evening, as they sat in the theatre listening to th lively overture, even Miss Lydia was minded to relegate the troubles, for the hour, to second place. The major, in spotle

n, with his extraordinary coat showing only where it was ely buttoned, and his white hair smoothly roached, looked y fine and distinguished. The curtain went up on the first of "A Magnolia Flower," revealing a typical Southern plan on scene. Major Talbot betrayed some interest.

Oh, see!" exclaimed Miss Lydia, nudging his arm, and ting to her programme.

he major put on his glasses and read the line in the cast haracters that her finger indicated.

ol. Webster Calhoun. . . . H. Hopkins Hargraves.

t's our Mr. Hargraves," said Miss Lydia. "It must be his appearance in what he calls 'the legitimate.' I'm so glad him."

ot until the second act did Col. Webster Calhoun appear n the stage. When he made his entry Major Talbot gave udible sniff, glared at him, and seemed to freeze solid. s Lydia uttered a little ambiguous squeak and crumpled programme in her hand. For Colonel Calhoun was made as nearly resembling Major Talbot as one pea does another. The long, thin, white hair, curly at the ends, the aristatic beak of a nose, the crumpled, wide, ravelling shirt t, the string tie, with the bow nearly under one ear, were ost exactly duplicated. And then, to clinch the imitation, wore the twin to the major's supposed to be unparalleled . High-collared, baggy, empire-waisted, ample-skirted, ging a foot lower in front than behind, the garment could been designed from no other pattern. From then on, the or and Miss Lydia sat bewitched, and saw the counterfeit entment of a haughty Talbot "dragged," as the major ward expressed it, "through the slanderous mire of a corstage."

r. Hargraves had used his opportunities well. He had ht the major's little idiosyncrasies of speech, accent, and nation and his pompous courtliness to perfection—exag-

gerating all to the purpose of the stage. When he performed that marvelous bow that the major fondly imagined to be the pink of all salutations, the audience sent forth a sudden round of hearty applause.

Miss Lydia sat immovable, not daring to glance toward her father. Sometimes her hand next to him would be laid against her cheek, as if to conceal the smile which, in spite of her disapproval, she could not entirely suppress.

The culmination of Hargraves's audacious imitation took place in the third act. The scene is where Colonel Calhoun entertains a few of the neighboring planters in his "den."

Standing at a table in the centre of the stage, with his friends grouped about him, he delivers that inimitable rambling, character monologue so famous in "A Magnolia Flower," at the same time that he deftly makes juleps for the party.

Major Talbot, sitting quietly, but white with indignation heard his best stories retold, his pet theories and hobbies advanced and expanded, and the dream of the "Anecdotes and Reminiscences" served, exaggerated and garbled. His favorite narrative—that of his duel with Rathbone Culbertson—was not omitted, and it was delivered with more fire, egotism, and gusto than the major himself put into it.

The monologue concluded with a quaint, delicious, witty little lecture on the art of concocting a julep, illustrated by the act. Here Major Talbot's delicate but showy science was reproduced to a hair's breadth—from his dainty handling of the fragrant weed—"the one-thousandth part of a grain too much pressure, gentlemen, and you extract the bitterness, instead of the aroma, of this heaven-bestowed plant"—to his solicitous selection of the oaten straws.

At the close of the scene the audience raised a tumultuous roar of appreciation. The portrayal of the type was so exact, so sure and thorough, that the leading characters in the play

re forgotten. After repeated calls, Hargraves came before
curtain and bowed, his rather boyish face bright and
shed with the knowledge of success.

At last Miss Lydia turned and looked at the major. His
n nostrils were working like the gills of a fish. He laid both
king hands upon the arms of his chair to rise.

"We will go, Lydia," he said, chokingly. "This is an abomi-
ble—desecration."

Before he could rise, she pulled him back into his seat.

"We will stay it out," she declared. "Do you want to ad-
tise the copy by exhibiting the original coat?" So they re-
ined to the end.

Hargraves's success must have kept him up late that night,
neither at the breakfast nor at the dinner table did he
pear.

About three in the afternoon he tapped at the door of
jor Talbot's study. The major opened it, and Hargraves
lked in with his hands full of the morning papers—too full
his triumph to notice anything unusual in the major's
neanor.

"I put it all over 'em last night, major," he began, exult-
ly. "I had my inning, and, I think, scored. Here's what the
st says:

"His conception and portrayal of the old-time Southern colo-
, with his absurd grandiloquence, his eccentric garb, his quaint
ms and phrases, his moth-eaten pride of family, and his
ly kind heart, fastidious sense of honor, and lovable simplic-
is the best delineation of a character rôle on the boards to-
. The coat worn by Colonel Calhoun is itself nothing less than
evolution of genius. Mr. Hargraves has captured his public.

"How does that sound, major, for a first nighter?"

I had the honor"—the major's voice sounded ominously
id—"of witnessing your very remarkable performance, sir,
night."

Hargraves looked disconcerted.

"You were there? I didn't know you ever—I didn't know you cared for the theatre. Oh, I say, Major Talbot," he exclaimed, frankly, "don't you be offended. I admit I did get a lot of pointers from you that helped me out wonderfully in the part. But it's a type, you know—not individual. The way the audience caught on shows that. Half the patrons of that theatre are Southerners. They recognized it."

"Mr. Hargraves," said the major, who had remained standing, "you have put upon me an unpardonable insult. You have burlesqued my person, grossly betrayed my confidence, and misused my hospitality. If I thought you possessed the faintest conception of what is the sign manual of a gentleman, or what is due one, I would call you out, sir, old as I am. I will ask you to leave the room, sir."

The actor appeared to be slightly bewildered, and seemed hardly to take in the full meaning of the old gentleman's words.

"I am truly sorry you took offence," he said, regretfully. "Up here we don't look at things just as you people do. I know men who would buy out half the house to have their personality put on the stage so the public would recognize it."

"They are not from Alabama, sir," said the major, haughtily.

"Perhaps not. I have a pretty good memory, major; let me quote a few lines from your book. In response to a toast at a banquet given in—Milledgeville, I believe—you uttered, and intend to have printed these words:

"The Northern man is utterly without sentiment or warmth except in so far as the feelings may be turned to his own commercial profit. He will suffer without resentment any imputation cast upon the honor of himself or his loved ones that does not bear with it the consequence of pecuniary loss. In his charity he gives with a liberal hand; but it must be heralded with the trumpet and chronicled in brass.

"Do you think that picture is fairer than the one you saw Colonel Calhoun last night?"

"The description," said the major, frowning, "is—not without grounds. Some exag—latitude must be allowed in public speaking."

"And in public acting," replied Hargraves.

"That is not the point," persisted the major, unrelenting. It was a personal caricature. I positively decline to overlook sir."

"Major Talbot," said Hargraves, with a winning smile, "I wish you would understand me. I want you to know that I never dreamed of insulting you. In my profession, all life belongs to me. I take what I want, and what I can, and return over the footlights. Now, if you will, let's let it go at that. came in to see you about something else. We've been pretty good friends for some months, and I'm going to take the risk offending you again. I know you are hard up for money—never mind how I found out; a boarding house is no place keep such matters secret—and I want you to let me help you out of the pinch. I've been there often enough myself. 've been getting a fair salary all the season, and I've saved me money. You're welcome to a couple hundred—or even ore—until you get——"

"Stop!" commanded the major, with his arm outstretched. It seems that my book didn't lie, after all. You think your oney salve will heal all the hurts of honor. Under no circumstances would I accept a loan from a casual acquaintance; d as to you, sir, I would starve before I would consider ur insulting offer of a financial adjustment of the circumnces we have discussed. I beg to repeat my request relative your quitting the apartment."

Hargraves took his departure without another word. He o left the house the same day, moving, as Mrs. Vardeman plained at the supper table, nearer the vicinity of the down-

town theatre, where "A Magnolia Flower" was booked for a week's run.

Critical was the situation with Major Talbot and Miss Lydia. There was no one in Washington to whom the major's scruples allowed him to apply for a loan. Miss Lydia wrote a letter to Uncle Ralph, but it was doubtful whether that relative's constricted affairs would permit him to furnish help. The major was forced to make an apologetic address to Mrs. Vardeman regarding the delayed payment for board, referring to "delinquent rentals" and "delayed remittances" in a rather confused strain.

Deliverance came from an entirely unexpected source.

Late one afternoon the door maid came up and announced an old colored man who wanted to see Major Talbot. The major asked that he be sent up to his study. Soon an old darkey appeared in the doorway, with his hat in hand, bowing, and scraping with one clumsy foot. He was quite decently dressed in a baggy suit of black. His big, coarse shoes shone with a metallic lustre suggestive of stove polish. His bushy wool was gray—almost white. After middle life, it is difficult to estimate the age of a Negro. This one might have seen as many years as had Major Talbot.

"I be bound you don't know me, Mars' Pendleton," were his first words.

The major rose and came forward at the old, familiar style of address. It was one of the old plantation darkeys without a doubt; but they had been widely scattered, and he could not recall the voice or face.

"I don't believe I do," he said, kindly—"unless you will assist my memory."

"Don't you 'member Cindy's Mose, Mars' Pendleton, what 'migrated 'mediately after de war?"

"Wait a moment," said the major, rubbing his forehead with the tips of his fingers. He loved to recall everything con-

cted with those beloved days. "Cindy's Mose," he reflected. ou worked among the horses—breaking the colts. Yes, I re-ember now. After the surrender, you took the name of—n't prompt me—Mitchell, and went to the West—to Ne-aska."

"Yassir, yassir,"—the old man's face stretched with a de-hted grin—"dat's him, dat's it. Newbraska. Dat's me—ose Mitchell. Old Uncle Mose Mitchell, dey calls me now. d mars', your pa, gimme a pah of dem mule colts when I ' fur to staht me goin' with. You 'member dem colts, Mars' ndleton?"

"I don't seem to recall the colts," said the major. "You ow I was married the first year of the war and living at the d Follinsbee place. But sit down, sit down, Uncle Mose. I'm id to see you. I hope you have prospered."

Uncle Mose took a chair and laid his hat carefully on the or beside it.

"Yassir; of late I done mouty famous. When I first got to ewbraska, dey folks come all roun' me to see dem mule colts. ey ain't see no mules like dem in Newbraska. I sold dem ules for three hundred dollars. Yassir—three hundred.

"Den I open a blacksmith shop, suh, and made some oney and bought some lan'. Me and my old 'oman done sed up seb'm chillun, and all doin' well 'cept two of 'em at died. Fo' year ago a railroad come along and staht a vn slam ag'inst my lan', and, suh, Mars' Pendleton, Uncle ose am worth lem'm thousand dollars in money, property, d lan'."

"I'm glad to hear it," said the major, heartily. "Glad to hear '

"And dat little baby of yo'n, Mars' Pendleton—one what u name Miss Lyddy—I be bound dat little tad done growed tell nobody wouldn't know her."

The major stepped to the door and called: "Lydia, dear, will you come?"

Miss Lydia, looking quite grown up and a little worried, came in from her room.

"Dar, now! What'd I tell you? I knowed dat baby done be plum growed up. You don't 'member Uncle Mose, child?"

"This is Aunt Cindy's Mose, Lydia," explained the major. "He left Sunnymead for the West when you were two years old."

"Well," said Miss Lydia, "I can hardly be expected to remember you, Uncle Mose, at that age. And, as you say, I'm 'plum growed up,' and was a blessed long time ago. But I'm glad to see you, even if I can't remember you."

And she was. And so was the major. Something alive and tangible had come to link them with the happy past. The three sat and talked over the olden times, the major and Uncle Mose, correcting or prompting each other as they reviewed the plantation scenes and days.

The major inquired what the old man was doing so far from his home.

"Uncle Mose am a delicate," he explained, "to de grand Baptis' convention in dis city. I never preached none, but bein' a residin' elder in de church, and able fur to pay my own expenses, dey sent me along."

"And how did you know we were in Washington?" inquired Miss Lydia.

"Dey's a cullud man works in de hotel whar I stops, what comes from Mobile. He told me he seen Mars' Pendleton comin' outen dish here house one mawnin'.

"What I come fur," continued Uncle Mose, reaching into his pocket—"besides de sight of home folks—was to pay Mars' Pendleton what I owes him."

"Owe me?" said the major, in surprise.

"Yassir—three hundred dollars." He handed the major a

l of bills. "When I lef' old mars' says: 'Take dem mule
ts, Mose, and, if it be so you gits able, pay fur 'em.' Yas-
—dem was his words. De war had done lef' old mars' po'
self. Old mars' bein' long 'go dead, de debt descends to
ırs' Pendleton. Three hundred dollars. Uncle Mose is
nty able to pay now. When dat railroad buy my lan' I laid
to pay for dem mules. Count de money, Mars' Pendleton.
t's what I sold dem mules fur. Yassir."

Tears were in Major Talbot's eyes. He took Uncle Mose's
ıd and laid his other upon his shoulder.

'Dear, faithful old servitor," he said in an unsteady voice,
don't mind saying to you that 'Mars' Pendleton' spent his
t dollar in the world a week ago. We will accept this money,
ıcle Mose, since, in a way, it is a sort of payment, as well
a token of the loyalty and devotion of the old régime.
dia, my dear, take the money. You are better fitted than I
manage its expenditure."

'Take it, honey," said Uncle Mose. "Hit belongs to you.
t's Talbot money."

After Uncle Mose had gone, Miss Lydia had a good cry
or joy; and the major turned his face to a corner, and
oked his clay pipe volcanically.

The succeeding days saw the Talbots restored to peace and
e. Miss Lydia's face lost its worried look. The major ap-
ıred in a new frock coat, in which he looked like a wax
ıre personifying the memory of his golden age. Another
olisher who read the manuscript of the "Anecdotes and
miniscences" thought that, with a little retouching and
ing down of the high lights, he could make a really bright
l salable volume of it. Altogether, the situation was com-
table, and not without the touch of hope that is often
eter than arrived blessings.

One day, about a week after their piece of good luck, a
id brought a letter for Miss Lydia to her room. The post

mark showed that it was from New York. Not knowing any one there, Miss Lydia, in a mild flutter of wonder, sat down by her table and opened the letter with her scissors. This was what she read:

DEAR MISS TALBOT:

I thought you might be glad to learn of my good fortune. I have received and accepted an offer of two hundred dollars per week by a New York stock company to play Colonel Calhoun in "A Magnolia Flower."

There is something else I wanted you to know. I guess you'd better not tell Major Talbot. I was anxious to make him some amends for the great help he was to me in studying the part, and for the bad humor he was in about it. He refused to let me, so I did it anyhow. I could easily spare the three hundred.

Sincerely yours,

H. HOPKINS HARGRAVES.

P. S. How did I play Uncle Mose?

Major Talbot, passing through the hall, saw Miss Lydia's door open and stopped.

"Any mail for us this morning, Lydia dear?" he asked.

Miss Lydia slid the letter beneath a fold of her dress.

"The *Mobile Chronicle* came," she said, promptly. "It's on the table in your study."

The Ransom of Red Chief

IT LOOKED like a good thing: but wait till I tell you. We were down South, in Alabama—Bill Driscoll and myself—when this kidnapping idea struck us. It was, as Bill afterward expressed it, "during a moment of temporary mental aberration"; but we didn't find that out till later.

There was a town down there, as flat as a flannel-cake, and ed Summit, of course. It contained inhabitants of as un-eterious and self-satisfied a class of peasantry as ever stered around a Maypole.

Bill and me had a joint capital of about six hundred dol-, and we needed just two thousand dollars more to pull a fraudulent town-lot scheme in Western Illinois with. e talked it over on the front steps of the Hotel. Philo-genitiveness, says we, is strong in semi-rural communities; refore, and for other reasons, a kidnapping project ought do better there than in the radius of newspapers that send orters out in plain clothes to stir up talk about such ngs. We knew that Summit couldn't get after us with any-ng stronger than constables and, maybe, some lackadaisical odhounds and a diatribe or two in the *Weekly Farmers' dget*. So, it looked good.

We selected for our victim the only child of a prominent zen named Ebenezer Dorset. The father was respectable l tight, a mortgage fancier and a stern, upright collection-te passer and forecloser. The kid was a boy of ten, with -relief freckles, and hair the color of the cover of the gazine you buy at the news-stand when you want to catch ain. Bill and me figured that Ebenezer would melt down a ransom of two thousand dollars to a cent. But wait till ll you.

About two miles from Summit was a little mountain, cov-d with a dense cedar brake. On the rear elevation of this untain was a cave. There we stored provisions.

One evening after sundown, we drove in a buggy past old rset's house. The kid was in the street, throwing rocks at itten on the opposite fence.

Hey, little boy!" says Bill, "would you like to have a bag of dy and a nice ride?"

The boy catches Bill neatly in the eye with a piece of brick.

"That will cost the old man an extra five hundred dollars," says Bill, climbing over the wheel.

That boy put up a fight like a welter-weight cinnamon bear; but, at last, we got him down in the bottom of the buggy and drove away. We took him up to the cave, and I hitched the horse in the cedar brake. After dark I drove the buggy to the little village, three miles away, where we had hired it, and walked back to the mountain.

Bill was pasting court-plaster over the scratches and bruises on his features. There was a fire burning behind the big rock at the entrance of the cave, and the boy was watching a pot of boiling coffee, with two buzzard tail-feathers stuck in his red hair. He points a stick at me when I come up, and says:

"Ha! cursed paleface, do you dare to enter the camp of Red Chief, the terror of the plains?"

"He's all right now," says Bill, rolling up his trousers and examining some bruises on his shins. "We're playing Indian. We're making Buffalo Bill's show look like magic-lantern views of Palestine in the town hall. I'm Old Hank, the Trapper, Red Chief's captive, and I'm to be scalped at daybreak. By Geronimo! that kid can kick hard."

Yes, sir, that boy seemed to be having the time of his life. The fun of camping out in a cave had made him forget that he was a captive himself. He immediately christened me Snake-eye, the Spy, and announced that, when his braves returned from the warpath, I was to be broiled at the stake at the rising of the sun.

Then we had supper; and he filled his mouth full of bacon and bread and gravy, and began to talk. He made a during-dinner speech something like this:

"I like this fine. I never camped out before; but I had a pet 'possum once, and I was nine last birthday. I hate to go to school. Rats ate up sixteen of Jimmy Talbot's aunt's speckled hen's eggs. Are there any real Indians in these

oods? I want some more gravy. Does the trees moving make
e wind blow? We had five puppies. What makes your nose
red, Hank? My father has lots of money. Are the stars hot?
whipped Ed Walker twice, Saturday. I don't like girls. You
ıssent catch toads unless with a string. Do oxen make any
oise? Why are oranges round? Have you got beds to sleep
ı in this cave? Amos Murray has got six toes. A parrot can
lk, but a monkey or a fish can't. How many does it take to
ake twelve?"

Every few minutes he would remember that he was a pesky
dskin, and pick up his stick rifle and tiptoe to the mouth
the cave to rubber for the scouts of the hated paleface.
ow and then he would let out a war-whoop that made Old
ank the Trapper shiver. That boy had Bill terrorized from
e start.

"Red Chief," says I to the kid, "would you like to go home?"

"Aw, what for?" says he. "I don't have any fun at home.
hate to go to school. I like to camp out. You won't take me
ck home again, Snake-eye, will you?"

"Not right away," says I. "We'll stay here in the cave
while."

"All right!" says he. "That'll be fine. I never had such fun
all my life."

We went to bed about eleven o'clock. We spread down
me wide blankets and quilts and put Red Chief between
. We weren't afraid he'd run away. He kept us awake for
ree hours, jumping up and reaching for his rifle and screech-
g: "Hist! pard," in mine and Bill's ears, as the fancied
ackle of a twig or the rustle of a leaf revealed to his young
agination the stealthy approach of the outlaw band. At last,
fell into a troubled sleep, and dreamed that I had been kid-
pped and chained to a tree by a ferocious pirate with red
ir.

Just at daybreak, I was awakened by a series of awful

screams from Bill. They weren't yells, or howls, or shouts, or whoops, or yawps, such as you'd expect from a manly set of vocal organs—they were simply indecent, terrifying, humiliating screams, such as women emit when they see ghosts or caterpillars. It's an awful thing to hear a strong, desperate, fat man scream incontinently in a cave at daybreak.

I jumped up to see what the matter was. Red Chief was sitting on Bill's chest, with one hand twined in Bill's hair. In the other he had the sharp case-knife we used for slicing bacon; and he was industriously and realistically trying to take Bill's scalp, according to the sentence that had been pronounced upon him the evening before.

I got the knife away from the kid and made him lie down again. But, from that moment, Bill's spirit was broken. He laid down on his side of the bed, but he never closed an eye again in sleep as long as that boy was with us. I dozed off for a while, but along toward sun-up I remembered that Red Chief had said I was to be burned at the stake at the rising of the sun. I wasn't nervous or afraid; but I sat up and lit my pipe and leaned against a rock.

"What you getting up so soon for, Sam?" asked Bill.

"Me?" says I. "Oh, I got a kind of pain in my shoulder. I thought sitting up would rest it."

"You're a liar!" says Bill. "You're afraid. You was to be burned at sunrise, and you was afraid he'd do it. And he would, too, if he could find a match. Ain't it awful, Sam? Do you think anybody will pay out money to get a little imp like that back home?"

"Sure," said I. "A rowdy kid like that is just the kind that parents dote on. Now, you and the Chief get up and cook breakfast, while I go up on the top of this mountain and reconnoitre."

I went up on the peak of the little mountain and ran my eye over the contiguous vicinity. Over towards Summit I ex-

ected to see the sturdy yeomanry of the village armed with cythes and pitchforks beating the countryside for the dasardly kidnappers. But what I saw was a peaceful landscape otted with one man ploughing with a dun mule. Nobody vas dragging the creek; no couriers dashed hither and yon, ringing tidings of no news to the distracted parents. There vas a sylvan attitude of somnolent sleepiness pervading that ection of the external outward surface of Alabama that lay xposed to my view. "Perhaps," says I to myself, "it has not et been discovered that the wolves have borne away the ender lambkin from the fold. Heaven help the wolves!" says , and I went down the mountain to breakfast.

When I got to the cave I found Bill backed up against the de of it, breathing hard, and the boy threatening to smash im with a rock half as big as a cocoanut.

"He put a red-hot boiled potato down my back," explained ill, "and then mashed it with his foot; and I boxed his ears. Have you got a gun about you, Sam?"

I took the rock away from the boy and kind of patched up ne argument. "I'll fix you," says the kid to Bill. "No man ver yet struck the Red Chief but he got paid for it. You etter beware!"

After breakfast the kid takes a piece of leather with strings rapped around it out of his pocket and goes outside the cave nwinding it.

"What's he up to now?" says Bill, anxiously. "You don't hink he'll run away, do you, Sam?"

"No fear of it," says I. "He don't seem to be much of a ome body. But we've got to fix up some plan about the ranom. There don't seem to be much excitement around Sumit on account of his disappearance; but maybe they haven't ealized yet that he's gone. His folks may think he's spending ne night with Aunt Jane or one of the neighbors. Anyhow,

he'll be missed to-day. To-night we must get a message to his father demanding the two thousand dollars for his return."

Just then we heard a kind of war-whoop, such as David might have emitted when he knocked out the champion Goliath. It was a sling that Red Chief had pulled out of his pocket, and he was whirling it around his head.

I dodged, and heard a heavy thud and a kind of a sigh from Bill, like a horse gives out when you take his saddle off. A niggerhead rock the size of an egg had caught Bill just behind his left ear. He loosened himself all over and fell in the fire across the frying pan of hot water for washing the dishes. I dragged him out and poured cold water on his head for half an hour.

By and by, Bill sits up and feels behind his ear and says: "Sam, do you know who my favorite Biblical character is?"

"Take it easy," says I. "You'll come to your senses presently."

"King Herod," says he. "You won't go away and leave me here alone, will you, Sam?"

I went out and caught that boy and shook him until his freckles rattled.

"If you don't behave," says I, "I'll take you straight home. Now, are you going to be good, or not?"

"I was only funning," says he, sullenly. "I didn't mean to hurt Old Hank. But what did he hit me for? I'll behave, Snake-eye, if you won't send me home, and if you'll let me play the Black Scout to-day."

"I don't know the game," says I. "That's for you and Mr. Bill to decide. He's your playmate for the day. I'm going away for a while, on business. Now, you come in and make friends with him and say you are sorry for hurting him, or home you go, at once."

I made him and Bill shake hands, and then I took Bill aside and told him I was going to Poplar Grove, a little village three

iles from the cave, and find out what I could about how ıe kidnapping had been regarded in Summit. Also, I thought best to send a peremptory letter to old man Dorset that ay, demanding the ransom and dictating how it should be aid.

"You know, Sam," says Bill, "I've stood by you without ıtting an eye in earthquakes, fire and flood—in poker games, ynamite outrages, police raids, train robberies, and cyclones. never lost my nerve yet till we kidnapped that two-legged yrocket of a kid. He's got me going. You won't leave me ng with him, will you, Sam?"

"I'll be back some time this afternoon," says I. "You must ep the boy amused and quiet till I return. And now we'll rite the letter to old Dorset."

Bill and I got paper and pencil and worked on the letter hile Red Chief, with a blanket wrapped around him, strut-d up and down, guarding the mouth of the cave. Bill egged me tearfully to make the ransom fifteen hundred dol-rs instead of two thousand. "I ain't attempting," says he, o decry the celebrated moral aspect of parental affection, ıt we're dealing with humans, and it ain't human for any-ody to give up two thousand dollars for that forty-pound ıunk of freckled wildcat. I'm willing to take a chance at fteen hundred dollars. You can charge the difference up to e."

So, to relieve Bill, I acceded, and we collaborated a letter ıat ran this way:

BENEZER DORSET, ESQ.:

We have your boy concealed in a place far from Summit. It useless for you or the most skilful detectives to attempt to ıd him. Absolutely, the only terms on which you can have him stored to you are these: We demand fifteen hundred dollars large bills for his return; the money to be left at midnight -night at the same spot and in the same box as your reply—

as hereinafter described. If you agree to these terms, send your answer in writing by a solitary messenger to-night at half-past eight o'clock. After crossing Owl Creek on the road to Poplar Grove, there are three large trees about a hundred yards apart, close to the fence of the wheat field on the right-hand side. At the bottom of the fence-post, opposite the third tree, will be found a small pasteboard box.

The messenger will place the answer in this box and return immediately to Summit.

If you attempt any treachery or fail to comply with our demand as stated, you will never see your boy again.

If you pay the money as demanded, he will be returned to you safe and well within three hours. These terms are final, and if you do not accede to them no further communication will be attempted.

TWO DESPERATE MEN.

I addressed this letter to Dorset, and put it in my pocket. As I was about to start, the kid comes up to me and says:

"Aw, Snake-eye, you said I could play the Black Scout while you was gone."

"Play it, of course," says I. "Mr. Bill will play with you. What kind of a game is it?"

"I'm the Black Scout," says Red Chief, "and I have to ride to the stockade to warn the settlers that the Indians are coming. I'm tired of playing Indian myself. I want to be the Black Scout."

"All right," says I. "It sounds harmless to me. I guess Mr. Bill will help you foil the pesky savages."

"What am I to do?" asks Bill, looking at the kid suspiciously.

"You are the hoss," says Black Scout. "Get down on your hands and knees. How can I ride to the stockade without a hoss?"

"You'd better keep him interested," said I, "till we get the scheme going. Loosen up."

Bill gets down on his all fours, and a look comes in his eye
e a rabbit's when you catch it in a trap.
"How far is it to the stockade, kid?" he asks, in a husky
anner of voice.
"Ninety miles," says the Black Scout. "And you have to
mp yourself to get there on time. Whoa, now!"
The Black Scout jumps on Bill's back and digs his heels in
s side.
"For Heaven's sake," says Bill, "hurry back, Sam, as soon
you can. I wish we hadn't made the ransom more than a
ousand. Say, you quit kicking me or I'll get up and warm
u good."
I walked over to Poplar Grove and sat around the post-
ice and store, talking with the chaw-bacons that came in
trade. One whiskerando says that he hears Summit is all
set on account of Elder Ebenezer Dorset's boy having been
t or stolen. That was all I wanted to know. I bought some
oking tobacco, referred casually to the price of black-eyed
as, posted my letter surreptitiously, and came away. The
stmaster said the mail-carrier would come by in an hour
take the mail to Summit.
When I got back to the cave Bill and the boy were not to
found. I explored the vicinity of the cave, and risked a
del or two, but there was no response.
So I lighted my pipe and sat down on a mossy bank to await
velopments.
In about half an hour I heard the bushes rustle, and Bill
bbled out into the little glade in front of the cave. Behind
n was the kid, stepping softly like a scout, with a broad
n on his face. Bill stopped, took off his hat, and wiped his
e with a red handkerchief. The kid stopped about eight
t behind him.
"Sam," says Bill, "I suppose you'll think I'm a renegade,
t I couldn't help it. I'm a grown person with masculine

proclivities and habits of self-defense, but there is a time when all systems of egotism and predominance fail. The boy is gone. I sent him home. All is off. There was martyrs in old times," goes on Bill, "that suffered death rather than give up the particular graft they enjoyed. None of 'em ever was subjugated to such supernatural tortures as I have been. I tried to be faithful to our articles of depredation; but there came a limit."

"What's the trouble, Bill?" I asks him.

"I was rode," says Bill, "the ninety miles to the stockade not barring an inch. Then, when the settlers was rescued, I was given oats. Sand ain't a palatable substitute. And then for an hour I had to try to explain to him why there was nothin' in holes, how a road can run both ways, and what makes the grass green. I tell you, Sam, a human can only stand so much. I takes him by the neck of his clothes and drags him down the mountain. On the way he kicks my legs black and blue from the knees down; and I've got to have two or three bites on my thumb and hand cauterized.

"But he's gone"—continues Bill—"gone home. I showed him the road to Summit and kicked him about eight feet nearer there at one kick. I'm sorry we lose the ransom; but it was either that or Bill Driscoll to the madhouse."

Bill is puffing and blowing, but there is a look of ineffable peace and growing content on his rose-pink features.

"Bill," says I, "there isn't any heart disease in your family is there?"

"No," says Bill, "nothing chronic except malaria and accidents. Why?"

"Then you might turn around," says I, "and have a look behind you."

Bill turns and sees the boy, and loses his complexion and sits down plump on the ground and begins to pluck aimlessly at grass and little sticks. For an hour I was afraid of his mind

d then I told him that my scheme was to put the whole
through immediately and that we would get the ransom
l be off with it by midnight if old Dorset fell in with our
position. So Bill braced up enough to give the kid a weak
t of a smile and a promise to play the Russian in a Japanese
r with him as soon as he felt a little better.

I had a scheme for collecting that ransom without danger
being caught by counterplots that ought to commend it-
f to professional kidnappers. The tree under which the
swer was to be left—and the money later on—was close to
road fence with big, bare fields on all sides. If a gang of
nstables should be watching for any one to come for the
e, they could see him a long way off crossing the fields or
the road. But no, sirree! At half-past eight I was up in that
e as well hidden as a tree toad, waiting for the messenger
arrive.

Exactly on time, a half-grown boy rides up the road on a
ycle, locates the pasteboard box at the foot of the fence-
st, slips a folded piece of paper into it, and pedals away
in back toward Summit.

I waited an hour and then concluded the thing was square.
lid down the tree, got the note, slipped along the fence
I struck the woods, and was back at the cave in another
f an hour. I opened the note, got near the lantern, and
d it to Bill. It was written with a pen in a crabbed hand,
l the sum and substance of it was this:

Two Desperate Men.

Gentlemen: I received your letter to-day by post, in regard
the ransom you ask for the return of my son. I think you are
ttle high in your demands, and I hereby make you a counter-
position, which I am inclined to believe you will accept. You
ng Johnny home and pay me two hundred and fifty dollars
cash, and I agree to take him off your hands. You had better
ne at night, for the neighbors believe he is lost, and I couldn't

be responsible for what they would do to anybody they saw bring ing him back. Very respectfully,

EBENEZER DORSET.

"Great Pirates of Penzance," says I; "of all the impu dent——"

But I glanced at Bill, and hesitated. He had the most ap pealing look in his eyes I ever saw on the face of a dumb o a talking brute.

"Sam," says he, "what's two hundred and fifty dollars, afte all? We've got the money. One more night of this kid wil send me to a bed in Bedlam. Besides being a thorough gentleman, I think Mr. Dorset is a spendthrift for making u such a liberal offer. You ain't going to let the chance go, ar you?"

"Tell you the truth, Bill," says I, "this little he ewe lam has somewhat got on my nerves too. We'll take him home pay the ransom, and make our getaway."

We took him home that night. We got him to go by tellin him that his father had bought a silver-mounted rifle and pair of moccasins for him, and we were to hunt bears th next day.

It was just twelve o'clock when we knocked at Ebenezer' front door. Just at the moment when I should have been at stracting the fifteen hundred dollars from the box under th tree, according to the original proposition, Bill was countin out two hundred and fifty dollars into Dorset's hand.

When the kid found out we were going to leave him a home he started up a howl like a calliope and fastened him self as tight as a leech to Bill's leg. His father peeled hi away gradually, like a porous plaster.

"How long can you hold him?" asks Bill.

"I'm not as strong as I used to be," says old Dorset, "bu I think I can promise you ten minutes."

'Enough," says Bill. "In ten minutes I shall cross the Cen-
l, Southern, and Middle Western States, and be legging it
ppingly for the Canadian border."
And, as dark as it was, and as fat as Bill was, and as good
unner as I am, he was a good mile and a half out of Sum-
t before I could catch up with him.

The Marry Month of May

ITHEE, smite the poet in the eye when he would sing to you
ises of the month of May. It is a month presided over
the spirits of mischief and madness. Pixies and flibberti-
bets haunt the budding woods; Puck and his train of midg-
are busy in town and country.
n May Nature holds up at us a chiding finger, bidding us
nember that we are not gods, but overconceited members
her own great family. She reminds us that we are brothers
the chowder-doomed clam and the donkey; lineal scions of
pansy and the chimpanzee, and but cousins-german to the
ing doves, the quacking ducks, and the housemaids and
icemen in the parks.
n May Cupid shoots blindfolded—millionaires marry ste-
graphers; wise professors woo white-aproned gum-chewers
ind quick-lunch counters; schoolma'ams make big bad
s remain after school; lads with ladders steal lightly over
ns where Juliet waits in her trellised window with her tele-
pe packed; young couples out for a walk come home mar-
l; old chaps put on white spats and promenade near the
rmal School; even married men, grown unwontedly tender
l sentimental, whack their spouses on the back and growl:
ow goes it, old girl?"

This May, who is no goddess, but Circe, masquerading at the dance given in honor of the fair débutante, Summer, puts the kibosh on us all.

Old Mr. Coulson groaned a little, and then sat up straight in his invalid's chair. He had the gout very bad in one foot, a house near Gramercy Park, half a million dollars, and a daughter. And he had a housekeeper. Mrs. Widdup. The fact and the name deserve a sentence each. They have it.

When May poked Mr. Coulson he became elder brother to the turtle-dove. In the window near which he sat were boxes of jonquils, of hyacinths, geraniums, and pansies. The breeze brought their odor into the room. Immediately there was a well-contested round between the breath of the flowers and the able and active effluvium from gout liniment. The liniment won easily; but not before the flowers got an uppercut to old Mr. Coulson's nose. The deadly work of the implacable, false enchantress May was done.

Across the park to the olfactories of Mr. Coulson came other unmistakable, characteristic, copyrighted smells of spring that belong to the-big-city-above-the-Subway, alone. The smells of hot asphalt, underground caverns, gasoline, patchouli, orange peel, sewer gas, Albany grabs, Egyptian cigarettes, mortar and the undried ink on newspapers. The inblowing air was sweet and mild. Sparrows wrangled happily everywhere outdoors. Never trust May.

Mr. Coulson twisted the ends of his white mustache, cursed his foot, and pounded a bell on the table by his side.

In came Mrs. Widdup. She was comely to the eye, fair flustered, forty, and foxy.

"Higgins is out, sir," she said, with a smile suggestive of vibratory massage. "He went to post a letter. Can I do anything for you, sir?"

"It's time for my aconite," said old Mr. Coulson. "Drop it for me. The bottle's there. Three drops. In water. D— tha

confound Higgins! There's nobody in this house cares if
ie here in this chair for want of attention."
Mrs. Widdup sighed deeply.
Don't be saying that, sir," she said. "There's them that
uld care more than any one knows. Thirteen drops you
l, sir?"
Three," said old man Coulson.
He took his dose and then Mrs. Widdup's hand. She
shed. Oh, yes, it can be done. Just hold your breath and
npress the diaphragm.
Mrs. Widdup," said Mr. Coulson, "the springtime's full
on us."
Ain't that right?" said Mrs. Widdup. "The air's real warm.
d there's bock-beer signs on every corner. And the park's
yaller and pink and blue with flowers; and I have such
oting pains up my legs and body."
'In the spring,'" quoted Mr. Coulson, curling his mus-
ne, "'a y— that is, a man's—fancy lightly turns to thoughts
ove.'"
Lawsy, now!" exclaimed Mrs. Widdup; "ain't that right?
ms like it's in the air."
'In the spring,'" continued old Mr. Coulson, "'a livelier
shines upon the burnished dove.'"
They do be lively, the Irish," sighed Mrs. Widdup, pen-
ly.
Mrs. Widdup," said Mr. Coulson, making a face at a
nge of his gouty foot, "this would be a lonesome house
hout you. I'm an—that is, I'm an elderly man—but I'm
th a comfortable lot of money. If half a million dollars'
th of Government bonds and the true affection of a heart
t, though no longer beating with the first ardor of youth,
still throb with genuine——"
The loud noise of an overturned chair near the portières

of the adjoining room interrupted the venerable and scarcely suspecting victim of May.

In stalked Miss Van Meeker Constantia Coulson, bony, durable, tall, high-nosed, frigid, well-bred, thirty-five, in-the neighborhood-of-Gramercy-Parkish. She put up a lorgnette Mrs. Widdup hastily stooped and arranged the bandages on Mr. Coulson's gouty foot.

"I thought Higgins was with you," said Miss Van Meeker Constantia.

"Higgins went out," explained her father, "and Mrs. Widdup answered the bell. That is better now, Mrs. Widdup thank you. No; there is nothing else I require."

The housekeeper retired, pink under the cool, inquiring stare of Miss Coulson.

"This spring weather is lovely, isn't it, daughter?" said the old man, consciously conscious.

"That's just it," replied Miss Van Meeker Constantia Coulson, somewhat obscurely. "When does Mrs. Widdup start on her vacation, papa?"

"I believe she said a week from to-day," said Mr. Coulson.

Miss Van Meeker Constantia stood for a minute at the window gazing toward the little park, flooded with the mellow afternoon sunlight. With the eye of a botanist she viewed the flowers—most potent weapons of insidious May. With the cool pulses of a virgin of Cologne she withstood the attack of the ethereal mildness. The arrows of the pleasant sunshine fell back, frostbitten, from the cold panoply of her unthrilled bosom. The odor of the flowers waked no soft sentiments in the unexplored recesses of her dormant heart. The chirp of the sparrows gave her a pain. She mocked at May.

But although Miss Coulson was proof against the season she was keen enough to estimate its power. She knew that elderly men and thick-waisted women jumped as educated

s in the ridiculous train of May, the merry mocker of the nths. She had heard of foolish old gentlemen marrying ir housekeepers before. What a humiliating thing, after all, s this feeling called love!

The next morning at 8 o'clock, when the iceman called, the k told him that Miss Coulson wanted to see him in the ement.

Well, ain't I the Olcott and Depew; not mentioning the t name at all?" said the iceman, admiringly, of himself.

As a concession he rolled his sleeves down, dropped his nooks on a syringa and went back. When Miss Van Meeker nstantia Coulson addressed him he took off his hat.

There is a rear entrance to this basement," said Miss Coul-, "which can be reached by driving into the vacant lot next or, where they are excavating for a building. I want you bring in that way within two hours 1,000 pounds of ice. u may have to bring another man or two to help you. I l show you where I want it placed. I also want 1,000 pounds ay delivered the same way for the next four days. Your npany may charge the ice on our regular bill. This is for ir extra trouble."

Miss Coulson tendered a ten-dollar bill. The iceman ved, and held his hat in his two hands behind him.

Now if you'll excuse me, lady. It'll be a pleasure to fix ngs up for you any way you please."

Alas for May!

About noon Mr. Coulson knocked two glasses off his table, ke the spring of his bell, and yelled for Higgins at the ne time.

Bring an axe," commanded Mr. Coulson, sardonically, "or d out for a quart of prussic acid, or have a policeman come nd shoot me. I'd rather that than be frozen to death."

It does seem to be getting cold, sir," said Higgins. "I n't noticed it before. I'll close the window, sir."

"Do," said Mr. Coulson. "They call this spring, do they If it keeps up long I'll go back to Palm Beach. House feel like a morgue."

Later Miss Coulson dutifully came in to inquire how th gout was progressing.

"'Stantia," said the old man, "how is the weather out doors?"

"Bright," answered Miss Coulson, "but chilly."

"Feels like the dead of winter to me," said Mr. Coulson.

"An instance," said Constantia, gazing abstractedly out o the window, "of 'winter lingering in the lap of spring,' thoug the metaphor is not in the most refined taste."

A little later she walked down by the side of the little par and on westward to Broadway to accomplish a little shopping

A little later than that Mrs. Widdup entered the invalid' room.

"Did you ring, sir?" she asked, dimpling in many place "I asked Higgins to go to the drug store, and I thought heard your bell."

"I did not," said Mr. Coulson.

"I'm afraid," said Mrs. Widdup, "I interrupted you, sir, ye terday when you were about to say something."

"How comes it, Mrs. Widdup," said old man Coulson sternly, "that I find it so cold in this house?"

"Cold, sir?" said the housekeeper, "why, now, since yo speak of it it do seem cold in this room. But outdoors it's a warm and fine as June, sir. And how this weather do seem to make one's heart jump out of one's shirt waist, sir. An the ivy all leaved out on the side of the house, and the hand organs playing, and the children dancing on the sidewalk- 'tis a great time for speaking out what's in the heart. Yo were saying yesterday, sir——"

"Woman!" roared Mr. Coulson, "you are a fool. I pay yo to take care of this house. I am freezing to death in my ow

m, and you come in and drivel to me about ivy and hand-
ans. Get me an overcoat at once. See that all doors and
dows are closed below. An old, fat, irresponsible, one-
ed object like you pratting about springtime and flowers
he middle of winter! When Higgins comes back, tell him
bring me a hot rum punch. And now get out!"

But who shall shame the bright face of May? Rogue
ugh she be and disturber of sane men's peace, no wise
gin's cunning nor cold storage shall make her bow her head
he bright galaxy of months.

Oh, yes, the story was not quite finished.

A night passed, and Higgins helped old man Coulson in
morning to his chair by the window. The cold of the room
s gone. Heavenly odors and fragrant mildness entered.

n hurried Mrs. Widdup, and stood by his chair. Mr. Coul-
reached his bony hand and grasped her plump one.

Mrs. Widdup," he said, "this house would be no home
hout you. I have half a million dollars. If that and the
e affection of a heart no longer in its youthful prime, but
l not cold could——"

I found out what made it cold," said Mrs. Widdup, lean-
against his chair. "'Twas ice—tons of it—in the basement
l in the furnace room, everywhere. I shut off the registers
t it was coming through into your room, Mr. Coulson,
or soul! And now it's May-time again."

A true heart," went on old man Coulson, a little wander-
ly, "that the springtime has brought to life again, and—
what will my daughter say, Mrs. Widdup?"

Never fear, sir," said Mrs. Widdup, cheerfully, "Miss
ulson, she ran away with the iceman last night, sir!"

The Whirligig of Life

Justice-of-the-peace Benaja Widdup sat in the door of hi office smoking his elder-stem pipe. Halfway to the Zenith th Cumberland range rose blue-gray in the afternoon haze. A speckled hen swaggered down the main street of the "settle ment," cackling foolishly.

Up the road came a sound of creaking axles, and then slow cloud of dust, and then a bull-cart bearing Ransie Bilbr and his wife. The cart stopped at the Justice's door, and th two climbed down. Ransie was a narrow six feet of sallo brown skin and yellow hair. The imperturbability of th mountains hung upon him like a suit of armor. The woma was calicoed, angled, snuff-brushed, and weary with unknow desires. Through it all gleamed a faint protest of cheate youth unconscious of its loss.

The Justice of the Peace slipped his feet into his shoes, fo the sake of dignity, and moved to let them enter.

"We-all," said the woman, in a voice like the wind blowin through pine boughs, "wants a divo'ce." She looked at Ransi to see if he noted any flaw or ambiguity or evasion or pa tiality or self-partisanship in her statement of their business.

"A divo'ce," repeated Ransie, with a solemn nod. "We-a can't git along together nohow. It's lonesome enough fu to live in the mount'ins when a man and a woman kee fur one another. But when she's a-spittin' like a wildcat a-sullenin' like a hoot-owl in the cabin, a man ain't got no ca to live with her."

"When he's a no-'count varmint," said the woman, witho any especial warmth, "a-traipsin' along of scalawags an moonshiners and a-layin' on his back pizen 'ith co'n whiske

a-pesterin' folks with a pack o' hungry, triflin' houn's to
!"

When she keeps a-throwin' skillet lids," came Ransie's
phony, "and slings b'ilin' water on the best coon-dog in
Cumberlands, and sets herself again' cookin' a man's vict-
and keeps him awake o' nights accusin' him of a sight
oin's!"

When he's al'ays a-fightin' the revenues, and gits a hard
e in the mount'ins fur a mean man, who's gwine to be
fur to sleep o' nights?"

ne Justice of the Peace stirred deliberately to his duties.
placed his one chair and a wooden stool for his peti-
ers. He opened his book of statutes on the table and
ned the index. Presently he wiped his spectacles and
ed his inkstand.

The law and the statutes," said he, "air silent on the sub-
of divo'ce as fur as the jurisdiction of this co't air con-
ed. But, accordin' to equity and the Constitution and the
en rule, it's a bad barg'in that can't run both ways. If a
ce of the peace can marry a couple, it's plain that he is
ld to be able to divo'ce 'em. This here office will issue a
ee of divo'ce and abide by the decision of the Supreme
to hold it good."

nsie Bilbro drew a small tobacco-bag from his trousers
et. Out of this he shook upon the table a five-dollar note.
l a b'arskin and two foxes fur that," he remarked. "It's
ne money we got."

The regular price of a divo'ce in this co't," said the Jus-
"air five dollars." He stuffed the bill into the pocket of
omespun vest with a deceptive air of indifference. With
n bodily toil and mental travail he wrote the decree upon
a sheet of foolscap, and then copied it upon the other.
ie Bilbro and his wife listened to his reading of the docu-

ment that was to give them freedom:

Know all men by these presents that Ransie Bilbro and h
wife, Ariela Bilbro, this day personally appeared before m
and promises that hereinafter they will neither love, hono
nor obey each other, neither for better nor worse, being
sound mind and body, and accept summons for divorce a
cording to the peace and dignity of the State. Herein fail nc
so help you God. Benaja Widdup, justice of the peace in an
for the county of Piedmont, State of Tennessee.

The Justice was about to hand one of the documents
Ransie. The voice of Ariela delayed the transfer. Both me
looked at her. Their dull masculinity was confronted by som
thing sudden and unexpected in the woman.

"Judge, don't you give him that air paper yit. 'Tain't a
settled, nohow. I got to have my rights first. I got to have m
ali-money. 'Tain't no kind of a way to do fur a man to divo'
his wife 'thout her havin' a cent fur to do with. I'm a-layi
off to be a-goin' up to brother Ed's up on Hogback Mount'i
I'm bound fur to hev a pa'r of shoes and some snuff an
things besides. Ef Ranse kin affo'd a divo'ce, let him pay m
ali-money."

Ransie Bilbro was stricken to dumb perplexity. There h
been no previous hint of alimony. Women were always brin
ing up startling and unlooked-for issues.

Justice Benaja Widdup felt that the point demanded j
dicial decision. The authorities were also silent on the su
ject of alimony. But the woman's feet were bare. The tr
to Hogback Mountain was steep and flinty.

"Ariela Bilbro," he asked, in official tones, "how much d
you 'low would be good and sufficient ali-money in the ca
befo' the co't?"

"I 'lowed," she answered, "fur the shoes and all, to say fi

ars. That ain't much fur ali-money, but I reckon that'll me up to brother Ed's."

The amount," said the Justice, "air not onreasonable. sie Bilbro, you air ordered by the co't to pay the plaintiff sum of five dollars befo' the decree of divo'ce air issued."

I hain't no mo' money," breathed Ransie, heavily. "I done l you all I had."

Otherwise," said the Justice, looking severely over his ctacles, "you air in contempt of co't."

I reckon if you gimme till to-morrow," pleaded the hus- d, "I mout be able to rake or scrape it up somewhars. I er looked for to be a-payin' no ali-money."

The case air adjourned," said Benaja Widdup, "till to- row, when you-all will present yo'selves and obey the order he co't. Followin' of which the decrees of divo'ce will be vered." He sat down in the door and began to loosen a estring.

We mout as well go down to Uncle Ziah's," decided sie, "and spend the night." He climbed into the cart on side, and Ariela climbed in on the other. Obeying the of his rope, the little red bull slowly came around on a , and the cart crawled away in the nimbus arising from wheels.

ustice-of-the-peace Benaja Widdup smoked his elder-stem . Late in the afternoon he got his weekly paper, and read ntil the twilight dimmed its lines. Then he lit the tallow dle on his table, and read until the moon rose, marking time for supper. He lived in the double log cabin on the e near the girdled poplar. Going home to supper he sed a little branch darkened by a laurel thicket. The dark re of a man stepped from the laurels and pointed a rifle is breast. His hat was pulled down low, and something ered most of his face.

want yo' money," said the figure, "'thout any talk. I'm

gettin' nervous, and my finger's a-wabblin' on this her trigger."

"I've only got f-f-five dollars," said the Justice, producin it from his vest pocket.

"Roll it up," came the order, "and stick it in the end o this here gun-bar'l."

The bill was crisp and new. Even fingers that were clums and trembling found little difficulty in making a spill of i and inserting it (this with less ease) into the muzzle of th rifle.

"Now I reckon you kin be goin' along," said the robber.

The Justice lingered not on his way.

The next day came the little red bull, drawing the cart t the office door. Justice Benaja Widdup had his shoes on, fo he was expecting the visit. In his presence Ransie Bilbr handed to his wife a five-dollar bill. The official's eye sharpl viewed it. It seemed to curl up as though it had been rolle and inserted into the end of a gun-barrel. But the Justice re frained from comment. It is true that other bills might b inclined to curl. He handed each one a decree of divorc Each stood awkwardly silent, slowly folding the guarantee o freedom. The woman cast a shy glance full of constraint a Ransie.

"I reckon you'll be goin' back up to the cabin," she sai "along 'ith the bull-cart. There's bread in the tin box setti on the shelf. I put the bacon in the b'ilin'-pot to keep th hounds from gettin' it. Don't forget to wind the clock t night."

"You air a-goin' to your brother Ed's?" asked Ransie, wit fine unconcern.

"I was 'lowin' to get along up thar afore night. I ain't sayi as they'll pester theyselves any to make me welcome, but hain't nowhar else fur to go. It's a right smart ways, and

kon I better be goin'. I'll be a-sayin' good-bye, Ranse—that if you keer fur to say so."

'I don't know as anybody's a hound dog," said Ransie, in nartyr's voice, "fur to not want to say good-bye—'less you so anxious to git away that you don't want me to say it."

Ariela was silent. She folded the five-dollar bill and her ree carefully, and placed them in the bosom of her dress. naja Widdup watched the money disappear with mourn- eyes behind his spectacles.

And then with his next words he achieved rank (as his oughts ran) with either the great crowd of the world's npathizers or the little crowd of its great financiers.

'Be kind o' lonesome in the old cabin to-night, Ransie," said.

Ransie Bilbro stared out at the Cumberlands, clear blue w in the sunlight. He did not look at Ariela.

'I 'low it might be lonesome," he said, "but when folks s mad and wants a divo'ce, you can't make folks stay."

'There's others wanted a divo'ce," said Ariela, speaking to wooden stool. "Besides, nobody don't want nobody to y."

'Nobody never said they didn't."

'Nobody never said they did. I reckon I better start on now brother Ed's."

'Nobody can't wind that old clock."

'Want me to go along 'ith you in the cart and wind it fur n, Ranse?"

The mountaineer's countenance was proof against emo- n. But he reached out a big hand and enclosed Ariela's n brown one. Her soul peeped out once through her im- ssive face, hallowing it.

'Them hounds sha'n't pester you no more," said Ransie. reckon I been mean and low down. You wind that clock, ela."

"My heart hit's in that cabin, Ranse," she whispered "along 'ith you. I ain't a-goin' to git mad no more. Le's b startin', Ranse, so's we kin git home by sundown."

Justice-of-the-peace Benaja Widdup interposed as the started for the door, forgetting his presence.

"In the name of the State of Tennessee," he said, "I forbi you-all to be a-defyin' of its laws and statutes. This co't i mo' than willin' and full of joy to see the clouds of discor and misunderstandin' rollin' away from two lovin' hearts, bu it air the duty of the co't to p'eserve the morals and integrit of the State. The co't reminds you that you air no longer ma and wife, but air divo'ced by regular decree, and as such a not entitled to the benefits and 'purtenances of the matte monal estate."

Ariela caught Ransie's arm. Did those words mean that sh must lose him now when they had just learned the lesson o life?

"But the co't air prepared," went on the Justice, "fur t remove the disabilities set up by the decree of divo'ce. Th co't air on hand to perform the solemn ceremony of marri'g thus fixin' things up and enablin' the parties in the case t resume the honor'ble and elevatin' state of mattermon which they desires. The fee fur performin' said ceremony wi be, in this case, to wit, five dollars."

Ariela caught the gleam of promise in his words. Swiftl her hand went to her bosom. Freely as an alighting dove th bill fluttered to the Justice's table. Her sallow cheek colore as she stood hand in hand with Ransie and listened to th reuniting words.

Ransie helped her into the cart, and climbed in beside he The little red bull turned once more, and they set out, han clasped, for the mountains.

Justice-of-the-peace Benaja Widdup sat in his door an took off his shoes. Once again he fingered the bill tucke

wn in his vest pocket. Once again he smoked his elder-
m pipe. Once again the speckled hen swaggered down the
ain street of the "settlement," cackling foolishly.

A Blackjack Bargainer

IE MOST DISREPUTABLE THING in Yancey Goree's law office
s Goree himself, sprawled in his creaky old armchair. The
kety little office, built of red brick, was set flush with the
eet—the main street of the town of Bethel.
Bethel rested upon the foot-hills of the Blue Ridge. Above
the mountains were piled to the sky. Far below it the tur-
l Catawba gleamed yellow along its disconsolate valley.
The June day was at its sultriest hour. Bethel dozed in the
oid shade. Trade was not. It was so still that Goree, reclin-
g in his chair, distinctly heard the clicking of the chips in
e grand-jury room, where the "court-house gang" was play-
g poker. From the open back door of the office a well-worn
th meandered across the grassy lot to the court-house. The
ading out of that path had cost Goree all he ever had—
st inheritance of a few thousand dollars, next the old family
me, and, latterly, the last shreds of his self-respect and man-
od. The "gang" had cleaned him out. The broken gambler
d turned drunkard and parasite; he had lived to see this
y come when the men who had stripped him denied him
eat at the game. His word was no longer to be taken. The
ily bout at cards had arranged itself accordingly, and to him
s assigned the ignoble part of the onlooker. The sheriff,
e county clerk, a sportive deputy, a gay attorney, and a
alk-faced man hailing "from the valley," sat at table, and

the sheared one was thus tacitly advised to go and grow more wool.

Soon wearying of his ostracism, Goree had departed for his office, muttering to himself as he unsteadily traversed the unlucky pathway. After a drink of corn whiskey from a demijohn under the table, he had flung himself into the chair, staring, in a sort of maudlin apathy, out at the mountains immersed in the summer haze. The little white patch he saw away up on the side of Blackjack was Laurel, the village near which he had been born and bred. There, also, was the birthplace of the feud between the Gorees and the Coltranes. Now no direct heir of the Gorees survived except this plucked and singed bird of misfortune. To the Coltranes, also, but one male supporter was left—Colonel Abner Coltrane, a man of substance and standing, a member of the State Legislature, and a contemporary with Goree's father. The feud had been a typical one of the region; it had left a red record of hate, wrong, and slaughter.

But Yancey Goree was not thinking of feuds. His befuddled brain was hopelessly attacking the problem of the future maintenance of himself and his favorite follies. Of late, old friends of the family had seen to it that he had whereof to eat and a place to sleep, but whiskey they would not buy for him, and he must have whiskey. His law business was extinct; no case had been intrusted to him in two years. He had been a borrower and a sponge, and it seemed that if he fell no lower it would be from lack of opportunity. One more chance —he was saying to himself—if he had one more stake at the game, he thought he could win; but he had nothing left to sell, and his credit was more than exhausted.

He could not help smiling, even in his misery, as he thought of the man to whom, six months before, he had sold the old Goree homestead. There had come from "back yan' " in the mountains two of the strangest creatures, a man named Pike

arvey and his wife. "Back yan'," with a wave of the hand ward the hills, was understood among the mountaineers to esignate the remotest fastnesses, the unplumbed gorges, the unts of lawbreakers, the wolf's den, and the boudoir of the ar. In the cabin far up on Blackjack's shoulder, in the wild- t part of these retreats, this odd couple had lived for twenty ars. They had neither dog nor children to mitigate the avy silence of the hills. Pike Garvey was little known in the ttlements, but all who had dealt with him pronounced him razy as a loon." He acknowledged no occupation save that a squirrel hunter, but he "moonshined" occasionally by way diversion. Once the "revenues" had dragged him from his r, fighting silently and desperately like a terrier, and he had en sent to state's prison for two years. Released, he popped ck into his hole like an angry weasel.

Fortune, passing over many anxious wooers, made a freak- n flight into Blackjack's bosky pockets to smile upon Pike d his faithful partner.

One day a party of spectacled, knickerbockered, and alto- ther absurd prospectors invaded the vicinity of the Garveys' bin. Pike lifted his squirrel rifle off the hook and took a ot at them at long range on the chance of their being reve- ues. Happily he missed, and the unconscious agents of good ck drew nearer, disclosing their innocence of anything re- mbling law or justice. Later on, they offered the Garveys enormous quantity of ready, green, crisp money for their irty-acre patch of cleared land, mentioning, as an excuse for ch a mad action, some irrelevant and inadequate nonsense out a bed of mica underlying the said property.

When the Garveys became possessed of so many dollars at they faltered in computing them, the deficiencies of life Blackjack began to grow prominent. Pike began to talk new shoes, a hogshead of tobacco to set in the corner, a w lock to his rifle; and, leading Martella to a certain spot

on the mountainside, he pointed out to her how a small cannon—doubtless a thing not beyond the scope of their fortune in price—might be planted so as to command and defend the sole accessible trail to the cabin, to the confusion of revenues and meddling strangers forever.

But Adam reckoned without his Eve. These things represented to him the applied power of wealth, but there slumbered in his dingy cabin an ambition that soared far above his primitive wants. Somewhere in Mrs. Garvey's bosom still survived a spot of femininity unstarved by twenty years of Blackjack. For so long a time the sounds in her ears had been the scaly-barks dropping in the woods at noon, and the wolves singing among the rocks at night, and it was enough to have purged her vanities. She had grown fat and sad and yellow and dull. But when the means came, she felt a rekindled desire to assume the perquisites of her sex—to sit at tea tables; to buy inutile things; to whitewash the hideous veracity of life with a little form and ceremony. So she coldly vetoed Pike's proposed system of fortifications, and announced that they would descend upon the world, and gyrate socially.

And thus, at length, it was decided, and the thing done. The village of Laurel was their compromise between Mrs. Garvey's preference for one of the large valley towns and Pike's hankering for primeval solitudes. Laurel yielded a halting round of feeble social distractions comportable with Martella's ambitions, and was not entirely without recommendation to Pike, its contiguity to the mountains presenting advantages for sudden retreat in case fashionable society should make it advisable.

Their descent upon Laurel had been coincident with Yancey Goree's feverish desire to convert property into cash, and they bought the old Goree homestead, paying four thousand dollars ready money into the spendthrift's shaking hand.

Thus it happened that while the disreputable last of the

rees sprawled in his disreputable office, at the end of his
v, spurned by the cronies whom he had gorged, strangers
elt in the halls of his fathers.

A cloud of dust was rolling slowly up the parched street,
th something traveling in the midst of it. A little breeze
fted the cloud to one side, and a new, brightly painted
ryall, drawn by a slothful gray horse, became visible. The
nicle deflected from the middle of the street as it neared
ree's office, and stopped in the gutter directly in front of
door.

On the front seat sat a gaunt, tall man, dressed in black
adcloth, his rigid hands incarcerated in yellow kid gloves.
the back seat was a lady who triumphed over the June
at. Her stout form was armored in a skin-tight silk dress
the description known as "changeable," being a gorgeous
mbination of shifting hues. She sat erect, waving a much-
amented fan, with her eyes fixed stonily far down the
eet. However Martella Garvey's heart might be rejoicing at
e pleasures of her new life, Blackjack had done his work
h her exterior. He had carved her countenance to the im-
e of emptiness and inanity; had imbued her with the
lidity of his crags and the reserve of his hushed interiors.
e always seemed to hear, whatever her surroundings were,
e scaly-barks falling and pattering down the mountainside.
e could always hear the awful silence of Blackjack sound-
g through the stillest of nights.

Goree watched this solemn equipage, as it drove to his
or, with only faint interest but when the lank driver wrapped
e reins about his whip, and awkwardly descended, and
pped into the office, he rose unsteadily to receive him,
ognizing Pike Garvey, the new, the transformed, the re-
tly civilized.

The mountaineer took the chair Goree offered him. They
o cast doubts upon Garvey's soundness of mind had a

strong witness in the man's countenance. His face was too long, a dull saffron in hue, and immobile as a statue's. Pale-blue, unwinking round eyes without lashes added to the singularity of his gruesome visage. Goree was at a loss to account for the visit.

"Everything all right at Laurel, Mr. Garvey?" he inquired.

"Everything all right, sir, and mighty pleased is Missis Garvey and me with the property. Missis Garvey likes yo' old place, and she likes the neighborhood. Society is what she 'lows she wants, and she is gettin' of it. The Rogerses, the Hapgoods, the Pratts, and the Troys hev been to see Missis Garvey, and she hev et meals to most of thar houses. The best folks hev axed her to differ'nt kinds of doin's. I cyan't say, Mr. Goree, that sech things suits me—fur me, give me them thar." Garvey's huge yellow-gloved hand flourished in the direction of the mountains. "That's whar I b'long, 'mongst the wild honey bees and the b'ars. But that ain't what I come fur to say, Mr. Goree. Thar's somethin' you got what me and Missis Garvey wants to buy."

"Buy!" echoed Goree. "From me?" Then he laughed harshly. "I reckon you are mistaken about that. I sold out to you, as you yourself expressed it, 'lock, stock, and barrel.' There isn't even a ramrod left to sell."

"You've got it; and we 'uns want it. 'Take the money,' says Missis Garvey, 'and buy it fa'r and squar'.' "

Goree shook his head. "The cupboard's bare," he said.

"We've riz," pursued the mountaineer, undeflected from his object, "a heap. We was pore as possums, and now we could hev folks to dinner every day. We been reco'nized, Missis Garvey says, by the best society. But there's somethin' we need we ain't got. She says it ought to been put in the 'ventory ov the sale, but it 'tain't thar. 'Take the money, then,' she says, 'and buy it fa'r and squar'.' "

"Out with it," said Goree, his racked nerves growing impatient.

Garvey threw his slouch hat upon the table, and leaned forward, fixing his unblinking eyes upon Goree's.

"Thar's a old feud," he said, distinctly and slowly, "'tween us 'uns and the Coltranes."

Goree frowned ominously. To speak of his feud to a feudist is a serious breach of the mountain etiquette. The man from "back yan'" knew it as well as the lawyer did.

"Na offense," he went on, "but purely in the way of business. Missis Garvey hev studied all about feuds. Most of the quality folks in the mountains hev 'em. The Settles and the Goforths, the Rankins and the Boyds, the Silers and the Galloways, hev all been cyarin' on feuds f'om twenty to a hundred year. The last man to drap was when yo' uncle, Jedge Wisley Goree, 'journed co't and shot Len Coltrane f'om the bench. Missis Garvey and me, we come f'om the po' white trash. Nobody wouldn't pick a feud with we'uns, no mo'n with a fam'ly of treetoads. Quality people everywhar, says Missis Garvey, has feuds. We 'uns ain't quality, but we're cyin' into it as fur as we can. 'Take the money, then,' says Missis Garvey, 'and buy Mr. Goree's feud, fa'r and squar'.'"

The squirrel hunter straightened a leg half across the room, drew a roll of bills from his pocket, and threw them on the table.

"Thar's two hundred dollars, Mr. Goree, what you would call a fa'r price for a feud that's been 'lowed to run down 'mongst yourn hev. Thar's only you left to cyar' on yo' side of it, and you'd make mighty po' killin'. I'll take it off yo' hands, and it'll set me and Missis Garvey up among the quality. Thar's the money."

The little roll of currency on the table slowly untwisted itself, writhing and jumping as its folds relaxed. In the silence that followed Garvey's last speech the rattling of the poker

chips in the court-house could be plainly heard. Goree knew that the sheriff had just won a pot, for the subdued whoop with which he always greeted a victory floated across the square upon the crinkly heat waves. Beads of moisture stood on Goree's brow. Stooping, he drew the wicker-covered demijohn from under the table, and filled a tumbler from it.

"A little corn liquor, Mr. Garvey? Of course you are joking about—what you spoke of? Opens quite a new market, doesn't it? Feuds, prime, two-fifty to three. Feuds, slightly damaged—two hundred, I believe you said, Mr. Garvey?"

Goree laughed self-consciously.

The mountaineer took the glass Goree handed him, and drank the whiskey without a tremor of the lids of his staring eyes. The lawyer applauded the feat by a look of envious admiration. He poured his own drink, and took it like a drunkard, by gulps, and with shudders at the smell and taste.

"Two hundred," repeated Garvey. "Thar's the money."

A sudden passion flared up in Goree's brain. He struck the table with his fist. One of the bills flipped over and touched his hand. He flinched as if something had stung him.

"Do you come to me," he shouted, "seriously with such a ridiculous, insulting, darn-fool proposition?"

"It's fa'r and squar'," said the squirrel hunter, but he reached out his hand as if to take back the money; and then Goree knew that his own flurry of rage had not been from pride or resentment, but from anger at himself, knowing that he would set foot in the deeper depths that were being opened to him. He turned in an instant from an outraged gentleman to an anxious chafferer recommending his goods.

"Don't be in a hurry, Garvey," he said, his face crimson and his speech thick. "I accept your p-p-proposition, though it's dirt cheap at two hundred. A t-trade's all right when both p-purchaser and b-buyer are s-satisfied. Shall I w-wrap it up for you, Mr. Garvey?"

Garvey rose, and shook out his broadcloth. "Missis Garvey
ill be pleased. You air out of it, and it stands Coltrane and
arvey. Just a scrap ov writin', Mr. Goree, you bein' a lawyer,
show we traded."

Goree seized a sheet of paper and a pen. The money was
utched in his moist hand. Everything else suddenly seemed
grow trivial and light.

"Bill of sale, by all means. 'Right, title, and interest in and
' . . . 'forever warrant and——' No, Garvey, we'll have to
ave out that 'defend,' " said Goree with a loud laugh. "You'll
ave to defend this title yourself."

The mountaineer received the amazing screed that the law-
r handed him, folded it with immense labor, and placed it
refully in his pocket.

Goree was standing near the window. "Step here," he said,
ising his finger, "and I'll show you your recently purchased
nemy. There he goes, down the other side of the street."

The mountaineer crooked his long frame to look through
e window in the direction indicated by the other. Colonel
bner Coltrane, an erect, portly gentleman of about fifty
earing the inevitable long, double-breasted frock coat of the
outhern lawmaker, and an old high silk hat, was passing on
e opposite sidewalk. As Garvey looked, Goree glanced at
s face. If there be such a thing as a yellow wolf, here was
s counterpart. Garvey snarled as his unhuman eyes followed
e moving figure, disclosing long amber-colored fangs.

"Is that him? Why, that's the man who sent me to the
n'tentiary once!"

"He used to be district attorney," said Goree, carelessly.
And, by the way, he's a first-class shot."

"I kin hit a squirrel's eye at a hundred yard," said Garvey.
So that thar's Coltrane! I made a better trade than I was
inkin'. I'll take keer ov this feud, Mr. Goree, better'n you
er did!"

He moved toward the door, but lingered there, betraying a slight perplexity.

"Anything else to-day?" inquired Goree with frothy sarcasm. "Any family traditions, ancestral ghosts, or skeletons in the closet? Prices as low as the lowest."

"Thar was another thing," replied the unmoved squirrel hunter, "that Missis Garvey was thinkin' of. 'Tain't so much in my line as t'other, but she wanted partic'lar that I should inquire, and ef you was willin', 'pay fur it,' she says, 'fa'r and squar'.' Thar's a buryin' groun', as you know, Mr. Goree, in the yard of yo' old place, under the cedars. Them that lies thar is yo' folks what was killed by the Coltranes. The monyments has the names on 'em. Missis Garvey says a fam'ly buryin' groun' is a sho' sign of quality. She says ef we git the feud, thar's somethin' else ought to go with it. The names on them monyments is 'Goree,' but they can be changed to ourn by——"

"Go! Go!" screamed Goree, his face turning purple. He stretched out both hands toward the mountaineer, his fingers hooked and shaking. "Go, you ghoul! Even a Ch-Chinaman protects the g-graves of his ancestors—go!"

The squirrel hunter slouched out of the door to his carryall. While he was climbing over the wheel Goree was collecting, with feverish celerity, the money that had fallen from his hand to the floor. As the vehicle slowly turned about, the sheep with a coat of newly grown wool, was hurrying, in indecent haste, along the path to the court-house.

At three o'clock in the morning they brought him back to his office, shorn and unconscious. The sheriff, the sportive deputy, the county clerk, and the gay attorney carried him, the chalk-faced man "from the valley" acting as escort.

"On the table," said one of them, and they deposited him there among the litter of his unprofitable books and papers.

"Yance thinks a lot of a pair of deuces when he's liquored
," sighed the sheriff, reflectively.
"Too much," said the gay attorney. "A man has no business
play poker who drinks as much as he does. I wonder how
uch he dropped to-night."
"Close to two hundred. What I wonder is whar he got it.
ance ain't had a cent fur over a month, I know."
"Struck a client, maybe. Well, let's get home before day-
ght. He'll be all right when he wakes up, except for a sort
beehive about the cranium."
The gang slipped away through the early morning twilight.
he next eye to gaze upon the miserable Goree was the orb
day. He peered through the uncurtained window, first del-
ging the sleeper in a flood of faint gold, but soon pouring
on the mottled red of his flesh a searching, white, summer
at. Goree stirred, half unconsciously, among the table's dé-
is, and turned his face from the window. His movement
slodged a heavy law book, which crashed upon the floor.
pening his eyes, he saw, bending over him, a man in a black
ck coat. Looking higher, he discovered a well-worn silk
t, and beneath it the kindly, smooth face of Colonel Abner
oltrane.
A little uncertain of the outcome, the colonel waited for
e other to make some sign of recognition. Not in twenty
ars had male members of these two families faced each
her in peace. Goree's eyelids puckered as he strained his
urred sight toward this visitor, and then he smiled serenely.
"Have you brought Stella and Lucy over to play?" he said,
lmly.
"Do you know me, Yancey?" asked Coltrane.
"Of course I do. You brought me a whip with a whistle in
e end."
So he had—twenty-four years ago; when Yancey's father was
s best friend.

Goree's eyes wandered about the room. The colonel understood. "Lie still, and I'll bring you some," said he. There was a pump in the yard at the rear, and Goree closed his eyes, listening with rapture to the click of its handle and the bubbling of the falling stream. Coltrane brought a pitcher of the cool water, and held it for him to drink. Presently Goree sat up—a most forlorn object, his summer suit of flax soiled and crumpled, his discreditable head tousled and unsteady. He tried to wave one of his hands toward the colonel.

"Ex-excuse—everything, will you?" he said. "I must have drunk too much whiskey last night, and gone to bed on the table." His brows knitted into a puzzled frown.

"Out with the boys a while?" asked Coltrane, kindly.

"No, I went nowhere. I haven't had a dollar to spend in the last two months. Struck the demijohn too often, I reckon, as usual."

Colonel Coltrane touched him on the shoulder.

"A little while ago, Yancey," he began, "you asked me if I had brought Stella and Lucy over to play. You weren't quite awake then, and must have been dreaming you were a boy again. You are awake now, and I want you to listen to me. I have come from Stella and Lucy to their old playmate, and to my old friend's son. They know that I am going to bring you home with me, and you will find them as ready with a welcome as they were in the old days. I want you to come to my house and stay until you are yourself again, and as much longer as you will. We heard of your being down in the world, and in the midst of temptation, and we agreed that you should come over and play at our house once more. Will you come, my boy? Will you drop our old family trouble and come with me?"

"Trouble!" said Goree, opening his eyes wide. "There was never any trouble between us that I know of. I'm sure we've always been the best of friends. But, good Lord, Colonel, how

uld I go to your home as I am—a drunken wretch, a miser-
e, degraded spendthrift and gambler——"

He lurched from the table to his armchair, and began to
ep maudlin tears, mingled with genuine drops of remorse
d shame. Coltrane talked to him persistently and reason-
y, reminding him of the simple mountain pleasures of
ich he had once been so fond, and insisting upon the genu-
eness of the invitation.

Finally he landed Goree by telling him he was counting
on his help in the engineering and transportation of a large
ount of felled timber from a high mountainside to a water-
y. He knew that Goree had once invented a device for this
rpose—a series of slides and chutes—upon which he had
tly prided himself. In an instant the poor fellow, delighted
the idea of his being of use to any one, had paper spread
on the table, and was drawing rapid but pitifully shaky lines
demonstration of what he could and would do.

The man was sickened of the husks; his prodigal heart
s turning again toward the mountains. His mind was yet
angely clogged, and his thoughts and memories were re-
ning to his brain one by one, like carrier pigeons over a
rmy sea. But Coltrane was satisfied with the progress he
d made.

Bethel received the surprise of its existence that afternoon
en a Coltrane and a Goree rode amicably together through
e town. Side by side they rode, out from the dusty streets
d gaping townspeople, down across the creek bridge, and
toward the mountain. The prodigal had brushed and
shed and combed himself to a more decent figure, but he
s unsteady in the saddle, and he seemed to be deep in the
ntemplation of some vexing problem. Coltrane left him in
mood, relying upon the influence of changed surroundings
restore his equilibrium.

Once Goree was seized with a shaking fit, and almost came

to a collapse. He had to dismount and rest at the side of the road. The colonel, foreseeing such a condition, had provided a small flask of whiskey for the journey but when it was offered to him Goree refused it almost with violence, declaring he would never touch it again. By and by he was recovered, and went quietly enough for a mile or two. Then he pulled up his horse suddenly, and said:

"I lost two hundred dollars last night, playing poker. Now, where did I get that money?"

"Take it easy, Yancey. The mountain air will soon clear it up. We'll go fishing, first thing, at the Pinnacle Falls. The trout are jumping there like bullfrogs. We'll take Stella and Lucy along, and have a picnic on Eagle Rock. Have you forgotten how a hickory-cured-ham sandwich tastes, Yancey, to a hungry fisherman?"

Evidently the colonel did not believe the story of his lost wealth; so Goree retired again into brooding silence.

By late afternoon they had traveled ten of the twelve miles between Bethel and Laurel. Half a mile this side of Laurel lay the old Goree place; a mile or two beyond the village lived the Coltranes. The road was now steep and laborious, but the compensations were many. The tilted aisles of the forest were opulent with leaf and bird and bloom. The tonic air put to shame the pharmacopæia. The glades were dark with mossy shade, and bright with shy rivulets winking from the ferns and laurels. On the lower side they viewed, framed in the near foliage, exquisite sketches of the far valley swooning in its opal haze.

Coltrane was pleased to see that his companion was yielding to the spell of the hills and woods. For now they had but to skirt the base of Painter's Cliff; to cross Elder Branch and mount the hill beyond, and Goree would have to face the squandered home of his fathers. Every rock he passed, every tree, every foot of the roadway, was familiar to him. Though

had forgotten the woods, they thrilled him like the music *Home, Sweet Home.*"

They rounded the cliff, descended into Elder Branch, and sed there to let the horses drink and splash in the swift er. On the right was a rail fence that cornered there, and owed the road and stream. Inclosed by it was the old apple hard of the home place; the house was yet concealed by brow of the steep hill. Inside and along the fence, poke- ies, elders, sassafras, and sumac grew high and dense. At stle of their branches, both Goree and Coltrane glanced and saw a long, yellow, wolfish face above the fence, star- at them with pale, unwinking eyes. The head quickly dis- carcd; there was a violent swaying of the bushes, and an ainly figure ran up through the apple orchard in the di- ion of the house zig-zagging among the trees.

That's Garvey," said Coltrane; "the man you sold out to. ere's no doubt but he's considerably cracked. I had to send up for moonshining once, several years ago, in spite of fact that I believed him irresponsible. Why, what's the tter, Yancey?"

Goree was wiping his forehead, and his face had lost its r. "Do I look queer, too?" he asked, trying to smile. "I'm remembering a few more things." Some of the alcohol evaporated from his brain. "I recollect now where I got two hundred dollars."

Don't think of it," said Coltrane, cheerfully. "Later on l figure it all out together."

They rode out of the branch, and when they reached the of the hill Goree stopped again.

Did you ever suspect I was a very vain kind of fellow, Colo- " he asked. "Sort of foolish proud about appearances?" The colonel's eyes refused to wander to the soiled, sagging of flax and the faded slouch hat.

It seems to me," he replied, mystified, but humoring him,

"I remember a young buck about twenty, with the tightest coat, the sleekest hair, and the prancingest saddle horse in the Blue Ridge."

"Right you are," said Goree, eagerly. "And it's in me yet, though it don't show. Oh, I'm as vain as a turkey gobbler, and as proud as Lucifer. I'm going to ask you to indulge this weakness of mine in a little matter."

"Speak out, Yancey. We'll create you Duke of Laurel and Baron of Blue Ridge, if you choose; and you shall have a feather out of Stella's peacock's tail to wear in your hat."

"I'm in earnest. In a few minutes we'll pass the house up there on the hill where I was born, and where my people have lived for nearly a century. Strangers live there now—and look at me! I am about to show myself to them ragged and poverty-stricken, a wastrel and a beggar. Colonel Coltrane, I'm ashamed to do it. I want you to let me wear your coat and hat until we are out of sight beyond. I know you think it a foolish pride, but I want to make as good a showing as I can when I pass the old place."

"Now, what does this mean?" said Coltrane to himself, as he compared his companion's sane looks and quiet demeanor with his strange request. But he was already unbuttoning the coat, assenting readily, as if the fancy were in no wise to be considered strange.

The coat and hat fitted Goree well. He buttoned the former about him with a look of satisfaction and dignity. He and Coltrane were nearly the same size—rather tall, portly, and erect. Twenty-five years were between them, but in appearance they might have been brothers. Goree looked older than his age; his face was puffy and lined; the colonel had the smooth, fresh complexion of a temperate liver. He put on Goree's disreputable old flax coat and faded slouch hat.

"Now," said Goree, taking up the reins, "I'm all right. I want you to ride about ten feet in the rear as we go by, Colo

so that they can get a good look at me. They'll see I'm
ack number yet, by any means. I guess I'll show up pretty
to them once more, anyhow. Let's ride on."

e set out up the hill at a smart trot, the colonel following,
e had been requested.

oree sat straight in the saddle, with head erect, but his
were turned to the right, sharply scanning every shrub
fence and hiding-place in the old homestead yard. Once
nuttered to himself, "Will the crazy fool try it, or did I
m half of it?"

was when he came opposite the little family burying
nd that he saw what he had been looking for—a puff of
e smoke, coming from the thick cedars in one corner. He
led so slowly to the left that Coltrane had time to urge
horse to that side, and catch him with one arm.

he squirrel hunter had not overpraised his aim. He had
the bullet where he intended, and where Goree had ex-
ed that it would pass—through the breast of Colonel Ab-
Coltrane's black frock coat.

oree leaned heavily against Coltrane, but he did not fall.
horses kept pace, side by side, and the colonel's arm kept
steady. The little white houses of Laurel shone through
trees, half a mile away. Goree reached out one hand and
ed until it rested upon Coltrane's fingers, which held his
le.

Good friend," he said, and that was all.

hus did Yancey Goree, as he rode past his old home,
e, considering all things, the best showing that was in his
er.

A Lickpenny Lover

THERE were 3,000 girls in the Biggest Store. Masie was on of them. She was eighteen and a saleslady in the gents' glove Here she became versed in two varieties of human beings the kind of gents who buy their gloves in department stor and the kind of women who buy gloves for unfortunate gent Besides this wide knowledge of the human species, Masie ha acquired other information. She had listened to the promu gated wisdom of the 2,999 other girls and had stored it in brain that was as secretive and wary as that of a Maltese ca Perhaps nature, foreseeing that she would lack wise counse lors, had mingled the saving ingredient of shrewdness alon with her beauty, as she has endowed the silver fox of the pric less fur above the other animals with cunning.

For Masie was beautiful. She was a deep-tinted blond with the calm poise of a lady who cooks butter cakes in window. She stood behind her counter in the Biggest Stor and as you closed your hand over the tape-line for your glo measure you thought of Hebe; and as you looked again yo wondered how she had come by Minerva's eyes.

When the floorwalker was not looking Masie chewed tu frutti; when he was looking she gazed up as if at the clou and smiled wistfully.

That is the shopgirl smile, and I enjoin you to shun it unle you are well fortified with callosity of the heart, caramels, an a congeniality for the capers of Cupid. This smile belong to Masie's recreation hours and not to the store; but the floo walker must have his own. He is the Shylock of the stor When he comes nosing around the bridge of his nose is toll-bridge. It is goo-goo eyes or "git" when he looks toward

ty girl. Of course not all floorwalkers are thus. Only a few
ago the papers printed news of one over eighty years of

ne day Irving Carter, painter, millionaire, traveller, poet,
mobilist, happened to enter the Biggest Store. It is due
im to add that his visit was not voluntary. Filial duty took
by the collar and dragged him inside, while his mother
andered among the bronze and terra-cotta statuettes.
arter strolled across to the glove counter in order to shoot
w minutes on the wing. His need for gloves was genuine;
ıad forgotten to bring a pair with him. But his action
lly calls for apology, because he had never heard of glove-
ıter flirtations.
s he neared the vicinity of his fate he hesitated, suddenly
cious of this unknown phase of Cupid's less worthy pro-
on.
hree or four cheap fellows, sonorously garbed, were lean-
over the counters, wrestling with the mediatorial hand-
rings, while giggling girls played vivacious seconds to
lead upon the strident string of coquetry. Carter would
retreated, but he had gone too far. Masie confronted
behind her counter with a questioning look in eyes as
ly, beautifully, warmly blue as the glint of summer sun
e on an iceberg drifting in Southern seas.
nd then Irving Carter, painter, millionaire, etc., felt a
n flush rise to his aristocratically pale face. But not from
lence. The blush was intellectual in origin. He knew in a
ıent that he stood in the ranks of the ready-made youths
wooed the giggling girls at other counters. Himself
ed against the oaken trysting place of a cockney Cupid
a desire in his heart for the favor of a glove salesgirl.
was no more than Bill and Jack and Mickey. And then
elt a sudden tolerance for them, and an elating, coura
s contempt for the conventions upon which he had fed,

and an unhesitating determination to have this perfect cre ture for his own.

When the gloves were paid for and wrapped Carter linger for a moment. The dimples at the corners of Masie's dama mouth deepened. All gentlemen who bought gloves linger in just that way. She curved an arm, showing like Psyche through her shirt-waist sleeve, and rested an elbow upon t show-case edge.

Carter had never before encountered a situation of whi he had not been perfect master. But now he stood far mo awkward than Bill or Jack or Mickey. He had no chance meeting this beautiful girl socially. His mind struggled to r call the nature and habits of shopgirls as he had read or hea of them. Somehow he had received the idea that they som times did not insist too strictly upon the regular channels introduction. His heart beat loudly at the thought of propo ing an unconventional meeting with this lovely and virgin being. But the tumult in his heart gave him courage.

After a few friendly and well-received remarks on gene subjects, he laid his card by her hand on the counter.

"Will you please pardon me," he said, "if I seem too bol but I earnestly hope you will allow me the pleasure of seei you again. There is my name; I assure you that it is with t greatest respect that I ask the favor of becoming one of yo fr---- acquaintances. May I not hope for the privilege?"

Masie knew men—especially men who buy gloves. Witho hesitation she looked him frankly and smilingly in the ey and said:

"Sure. I guess you're all right. I don't usually go out wi strange gentlemen, though. It ain't quite ladylike. Wh should you want to see me again?"

"As soon as I may," said Carter. "If you would allow me call at your home, I——"

Masie laughed musically. "Oh, gee, no!" she said, emph

lly. "If you could see our flat once! There's five of us in ee rooms. I'd just like to see ma's face if I was to bring a ntleman friend there!"

'Anywhere, then," said the enamored Carter, "that will be nvenient to you."

'Say," suggested Masie, with a bright-idea look in her ich-blow face; "I guess Thursday night will about suit me. ppose you come to the corner of Eighth Avenue and Forty-hth Street at 7:30. I live right near the corner. But I've got be back home by eleven. Ma never lets me stay out after ven."

Carter promised gratefully to keep the tryst, and then has-ed to his mother, who was looking about for him to ratify purchase of a bronze Diana.

A salesgirl, with small eyes and an obtuse nose, strolled near sie, with a friendly leer.

'Did you make a hit with his nobs, Masie?" she asked, niliarly.

'The gentleman asked permission to call," answered Masie, h the grand air, as she slipped Carter's card into the bosom her waist.

'Permission to call!" echoed small eyes, with a snigger. "Did say anything about dinner in the Waldorf and a spin in auto afterward?"

Oh, cheese it!" said Masie, wearily. "You've been used to ll things, I don't think. You've had a swelled head ever ce that hose-cart driver took you out to a chop suey joint. , he never mentioned the Waldorf; but there's a Fifth Ave-e address on his card, and if he buys the supper you can your life there won't be no pigtail on the waiter what es the order."

As Carter glided away from the Biggest Store with his ther in his electric runabout, he bit his lip with a dull pain his heart. He knew that love had come to him for the first

time in all the twenty-nine years of his life. And that the o
ject of it should make so readily an appointment with hi
at a street corner, though it was a step toward his desires, tc
tured him with misgivings.

Carter did not know the shopgirl. He did not know th
her home is often either a scarcely habitable tiny room or
domicile filled to overflowing with kith and kin. The stre
corner is her parlor, the park is her drawing room; the aven
is her garden walk; yet for the most part she is as inviola
mistress of herself in them as is my lady inside her tapestri
chamber.

One evening at dusk, two weeks after their first meetin
Carter and Masie strolled arm-in-arm into a little, dimly-l
park. They found a bench, tree-shadowed and secluded, a
sat there.

For the first time his arm stole gently around her. H
golden-bronze head slid restfully against his shoulder.

"Gee!" sighed Masie, thankfully. "Why didn't you ev
think of that before?"

"Masie," said Carter, earnestly, "you surely know that I lo
you. I ask you sincerely to marry me. You know me w
enough by this time to have no doubts of me. I want yo
and I must have you. I care nothing for the difference in o
stations."

"What is the difference?" asked Masie, curiously.

"Well, there isn't any," said Carter, quickly, "except
the minds of foolish people. It is in my power to give you
life of luxury. My social position is beyond dispute, and r
means are ample."

"They all say that," remarked Masie. "It's the kid they
give you. I suppose you really work in a delicatessen or follc
the races. I ain't as green as I look."

"I can furnish you all the proofs you want," said Cart

ly. "And I want you, Masie. I loved you the first day I you."

hey all do," said Masie, with an amused laugh, "to hear talk. If I could meet a man that got stuck on me the l time he'd seen me I think I'd get mashed on him."

lease don't say such things," pleaded Carter. "Listen to dear. Ever since I first looked into your eyes you have the only woman in the world for me."

h, ain't you the kidder!" smiled Masie. "How many other did you ever tell that?"

ıt Carter persisted. And at length he reached the flimsy, ering little soul of the shopgirl that existed somewhere down in her lovely bosom. His words penetrated the t whose very lightness was its safest armor. She looked up im with eyes that saw. And a warm glow visited her cool ks. Tremblingly, awfully, her moth wings closed, and she ıed about to settle upon the flower of love. Some faint mer of life and its possibilities on the other side of her e counter dawned upon her. Carter felt the change and ded the opportunity.

Marry me, Masie," he whispered, softly, "and we will go from this ugly city to beautiful ones. We will forget work business, and life will be one long holiday. I know where ould take you—I have been there often. Just think of a e where summer is eternal, where the waves are always ling on the lovely beach and the people are happy and as children. We will sail to those shores and remain there ng as you please. In one of those far-away cities there are d and lovely palaces and towers full of beautiful pictures statues. The streets of the city are water, and one travels ıt in——"

know," said Masie, sitting up suddenly. "Gondolas."

Yes," smiled Carter.

thought so," said Masie.

"And then," continued Carter, "we will travel on and se whatever we wish in the world. After the European cities w will visit India and the ancient cities there, and ride on el phants and see the wonderful temples of the Hindoos and th Brahmins and the Japanese gardens and the camel trains an chariot races in Persia, and all the queer sights of foreig countries. Don't you think you would like it, Masie?"

Masie rose to her feet.

"I think we had better be going home," she said, cooll "It's getting late."

Carter humored her. He had come to know her varyin thistle-down moods, and that it was useless to combat ther But he felt a certain happy triumph. He had held for a m ment, though but by a silken thread, the soul of his wi Psyche, and hope was stronger within him. Once she ha folded her wings and her cool hand had closed about his ow

At the Biggest Store the next day Masie's chum, Lulu, wa laid her in an angle of the counter.

"How are you and your swell friend making it?" she aske

"Oh, him?" said Masie, patting her side curls. "He ain't it any more. Say, Lu, what do you think that fellow want me to do?"

"Go on the stage?" guessed Lulu, breathlessly.

"Nit; he's too cheap a guy for that. He wanted me to mar him and go down to Coney Island for a wedding tour!"

The Defeat of the City

Robert walmsley's descent upon the city resulted in a k kenny struggle. He came out of the fight victor by a fortu and a reputation. On the other hand, he was swallowed up

city. The city gave him what he demanded and then
ded him with its brand. It remodelled, cut, trimmed, and
ıped him to the pattern it approves. It opened its social
s to him and shut him in on a close-cropped, formal lawn
the select herd of ruminants. In dress, habits, man-
provincialism, routine, and narrowness he acquired that
ming insolence, that irritating completeness, that sophis-
ed crassness, that over-balanced poise that makes the
hattan gentleman so delightfully small in his greatness.
ne of the up-state rural counties pointed with pride to the
essful young metropolitan lawyer as a product of its soil.
ears earlier this country had removed the wheat straw
between its huckleberry-stained teeth and emitted a de-
e and bucolic laugh as old man Walmsley's freckle-faced
" abandoned the certain three-per-diem meals of the one-
e farm for the discontinuous quick lunch counters of the
e-ringed metropolis. At the end of the six years no murder
coaching party, automobile accident or cotillion was
plete in which the name of Robert Walmsley did not fig-
Tailors waylaid him in the street to get a new wrinkle
the cut of his unwrinkled trousers. Hyphenated fellows
ıe clubs and members of the oldest subpœnaed families
glad to clap him on the back and allow him three letters
is name.

ıt the Matterhorn of Robert Walmsley's success was not
d until he married Alicia Van Der Pool. I cite the Matter-
, for just so high and cool and white and inaccessible was
daughter of the old burghers. The social Alps that ranged
ıt her—over whose bleak passes a thousand climbers
ggled—reached only to her knees. She towered in her own
osphere, serene, chaste, prideful, wading in no fountains,
ıg no monkeys, breeding no dogs for bench shows. She
a Van Der Pool. Fountains were made to play for her;
keys were made for other people's ancestors; dogs, she

understood, were created to be companions of blind perso and objectionable characters who smoked pipes.

This was the Matterhorn that Robert Walmsley acco plished. If he found, with the good poet with the game fo and artificially curled hair, that he who ascends to mounta tops will find the loftiest peaks most wrapped in clouds a snow, he concealed his chilblains beneath a brave and sm ing exterior. He was a lucky man and knew it, even thou he were imitating the Spartan boy with an ice-cream free beneath his doublet frappéing the region of his heart.

After a brief wedding tour abroad, the couple returned create a decided ripple in the calm cistern (so placid and co and sunless it is) of the best society. They entertained at th red brick mausoleum of ancient greatness in an old squa that is a cemetery of crumbled glory. And Robert Walms was proud of his wife; although while one of his han shook his guests' the other held tightly to his alpenstock a thermometer.

One day Alicia found a letter written to Robert by mother. It was an unerudite letter, full of crops and mothe love and farm notes. It chronicled the health of the pig a the recent red calf, and asked concerning Robert's in retu It was a letter direct from the soil, straight from home, f of biographies of bees, tales of turnips, pæans of new-l eggs, neglected parents and the slump in dried apples.

"Why have I not been shown your mother's letters?" asl Alicia. There was always something in her voice that ma you think of lorgnettes, of accounts at Tiffany's, of sled smoothly gliding on the trail from Dawson to Forty Mile, the tinkling of pendent prisms on your grandmothers' ch deliers, of snow lying on a convent roof, of a police serge refusing bail. "Your mother," continued Alicia, "invites us make a visit to the farm. I have never seen a farm. We go there for a week or two, Robert."

We will," said Robert, with the grand air of an associate reme Justice concurring in an opinion. "I did not lay the tation before you because I thought you would not care o. I am much pleased at your decision."

I will write to her myself," answered Alicia, with a faint shadowing of enthusiasm. "Félice shall pack my trunks at e. Seven, I think, will be enough. I do not suppose that r mother entertains a great deal. Does she give many house ies?"

obert arose, and as attorney for rural places filed a de- rer against six of the seven trunks. He endeavored to de- , picture, elucidate, set forth and describe a farm. His own ds sounded strange in his ears. He had not realized how roughly urbsidized he had become.

week passed and found them landed at the little country lon five hours out from the city. A grinning, stentorian, astic youth driving a mule to a spring wagon hailed Robert gely.

Hallo, Mr. Walmsley. Found your way back at last, have ? Sorry I couldn't bring in the automobile for you, but 's bull-tonguing the ten-acre clover patch with it to-day. ss you'll excuse my not wearing a dress suit over to meet —it ain't six o'clock yet, you know."

'm glad to see you, Tom," said Robert, grasping his her's hand. "Yes, I've found my way at last. You've a right ay 'at last.' It's been over two years since the last time. But ill be oftener after this, my boy."

licia, cool in the summer heat as an Arctic wraith, white Norse snow maiden in her flimsy muslin and fluttering parasol, came round the corner of the station; and n was stripped of his assurance. He became chiefly eye- t clothed in blue jeans, and on the homeward drive to mule alone did he confide in language the inwardness of thoughts.

They drove homeward. The low sun dropped a spen thrift flood of gold upon the fortunate fields of wheat. Th cities were far away. The road lay curling around wood an dale and hill like a ribbon lost from the robe of careless sun mer. The wind followed like a whinnying colt in the track Phœbus's steeds.

By and by the farmhouse peeped gray out of its faithf grove; they saw the long lane with its convoy of walnut tre running from the road to the house; they smelled the wi rose and the breath of cool, damp willows in the creek's be And then in unison all the voices of the soil began a cha addressed to the soul of Robert Walmsley. Out of the tilt aisles of the dim wood they came hollowly; they chirped an buzzed from the parched grass; they trilled from the rippl of the creek ford; they floated up in clear Pan's pipe not from the dimming meadows; the whippoorwills joined in they pursued midges in the upper air, slow-going cow-be struck out a homely accompaniment—and this was what ea one said: "You've found your way back at last, have you

The old voices of the soil spoke to him. Leaf and bud an blossom conversed with him in the old vocabulary of his ca less youth—the inanimate things, the familiar stones and rai the gates and furrows and roofs and turns of road had an el quence, too, and a power in the transformation. The count had smiled and he had felt the breath of it, and his heart w drawn as if in a moment back to his old love. The city w far away.

This rural atavism, then, seized Robert Walmsley and po sessed him. A queer thing he noticed in connection with was that Alicia, sitting at his side, suddenly seemed to him stranger. She did not belong to this recurrent phase. Nev before had she seemed so remote, so colorless and high— intangible and unreal. And yet he had never admired her mo than when she sat there by him in the rickety spring wago

ming no more with his mood and with her environment
n the Matterhorn chimes with a peasant's cabbage garden.
That night when the greetings and the supper were over,
entire family, including Buff, the yellow dog, bestrewed
lf upon the front porch. Alicia, not haughty but silent, sat
the shadow dressed in an exquisite pale-gray tea gown.
ert's mother discoursed to her happily concerning marma-
e and lumbago. Tom sat on the top step; Sisters Millie
Pam on the lowest step to catch the lightning bugs.
ther had the willow rocker. Father sat in the big armchair
h one of its arms gone. Buff sprawled in the middle of
porch in everybody's way. The twilight pixies and pucks
e forth unseen and plunged other poignant shafts of mem-
into the heart of Robert. A rural madness entered his soul.
e city was far away.

Father sat without his pipe, writhing in his heavy boots, a
rifice to rigid courtesy. Robert shouted: "No, you don't!"
fetched the pipe and lit it; he seized the old gentleman's
ts and tore them off. The last one slipped suddenly, and
. Robert Walmsley, of Washington Square, tumbled off
porch backward with Buff on top of him, howling fear-
y. Tom laughed sarcastically.

Robert tore off his coat and vest and hurled them into a
c bush.

"Come out here, you landlubber," he cried to Tom, "and
put grass seed on your back. I think you called me a 'dude'
hile ago. Come along and cut your capers."

Tom understood the invitation and accepted it with de-
t. Three times they wrestled on the grass, "side holds,"
n as the giants of the mat. And twice was Tom forced to
e grass at the hands of the distinguished lawyer. Dishev-
d, panting, each still boasting of his own prowess, they
mbled back to the porch. Millie cast a pert reflection upon
qualities of a city brother. In an instant Robert had se-

cured a horrid katydid in his fingers and bore down upon h
Screaming wildly, she fled up the lane pursued by the aven
ing glass of form. A quarter of a mile and they returned, s
full of apology to the victorious "dude." The rustic mania p
sessed him unabatedly.

"I can do up a cowpenful of you slow hayseeds," he p
claimed, vaingloriously. "Bring on your bulldogs, your hir
men, and your log-rollers."

He turned handsprings on the grass that prodded Tom
envious sarcasm. And then, with a whoop, he clattered to t
rear and brought back Uncle Ike, a battered colored retain
of the family, with his banjo, and strewed sand on the por
and danced "Chicken in the Bread Tray" and did buck-an
wing wonders for half an hour longer. Incredibly wild a
boisterous things he did. He sang, he told stories that set
but one shrieking, he played the yokel, the humorous clo
hopper; he was mad, mad with the revival of the old life
his blood.

He became so extravagant that once his mother soug
gently to reprove him. Then Alicia moved as though she w
about to speak, but she did not. Through it all she sat i
movable, a slim, white spirit in the dusk that no man mig
question or read.

By and by she asked permission to ascend to her room, s
ing that she was tired. On her way she passed Robert.
was standing in the door, the figure of vulgar comedy, w
ruffled hair, reddened face and unpardonable confusion of
tire—no trace there of the immaculate Robert Walmsley, t
courted clubman and ornament of select circles. He was do
a conjuring trick with some household utensils, and the fa
ily, now won over to him without exception, was beholdi
him with worshipful admiration.

As Alicia passed in Robert started suddenly. He had f

en for the moment that she was present. Without a glance
im she went on upstairs.

fter that the fun grew quiet. An hour passed in talk, and
ı Robert went up himself.

he was standing by the window when he entered their
n. She was still clothed as when they were on the porch.
side and crowding against the window was a giant apple
, full blossomed.

obert sighed and went near the window. He was ready to
t his fate. A confessed vulgarian, he foresaw the verdict
ıstice in the shape of that still, whiteclad form. He knew
rigid lines that a Van Der Pool would draw. He was a
ant gambolling indecorously in the valley, and the pure,
, white, unthawed summit of the Matterhorn could not
frown on him. He had been unmasked by his own actions.
the polish, the poise, the form that the city had given him
fallen from him like an ill-fitting mantle at the first breath
country breeze. Dully he awaited the approaching con-
ınation.

Robert," said the calm, cool voice of his judge, "I thought
arried a gentleman."

es, it was coming. And yet, in the face of it, Robert
lmsley was eagerly regarding a certain branch of the apple
upon which he used to climb out of that very window.
believed he could do it now. He wondered how many
soms there were on the tree—ten millions? But here was
eone speaking again:

thought I married a gentleman," the voice went on,
——"

Why had she come and was standing so close by his side?
But I find that I have married"—was this Alicia talking?—
ıething better—a man—Bob, dear, kiss me, won't you?"

he city was far away.

Squaring the Circle

AT THE HAZARD of wearying youth this tale of vehement em tions must be prefaced by a discourse on geometry.

Nature moves in circles; Art in straight lines. The natur is rounded; the artificial is made up of angles. A man lost the snow wanders, in spite of himself, in perfect circles; t city man's feet, denaturalized by rectangular streets and floo carry him ever away from himself.

The round eyes of childhood typify innocence; the narro line of the flirt's optic proves the invasion of art. The ho zontal mouth is the mark of determined cunning; who has n read Nature's most spontaneous lyric in lips rounded for t candid kiss?

Beauty is Nature in perfection; circularity is its chief att bute. Behold the full moon, the enchanting gold ball, t domes of splendid temples, the huckleberry pie, the weddi ring, the circus ring, the ring for the waiter, and the "roun of drinks.

On the other hand, straight lines show that Nature h been deflected. Imagine Venus's girdle transformed into "straight front"!

When we begin to move in straight lines and turn sha corners our natures begin to change. The consequence is th Nature, being more adaptive than Art, tries to conform to sterner regulations. The result is often a rather curious pro uct—for instance: A prize chrysanthemum, wood alcoh whiskey, a Republican Missouri, cauliflower *au gratin*, and New Yorker.

Nature is lost quickest in a big city. The cause is geomet cal, not moral. The straight lines of its streets and archit

, the rectangularity of its laws and social customs, the eviating pavements, the hard, severe, depressing, uncom- mising rules of all its ways—even of its recreation and rts—coldly exhibit a sneering defiance of the curved line of ure.

Wherefore, it may be said that the big city has demon- ted the problem of squaring the circle. And it may be ed that this mathematical introduction precedes an ac- nt of the fate of a Kentucky feud that was imported to city that has a habit of making its importations conform ts angles.

The feud began in the Cumberland Mountains between Folwell and the Harkness families. The first victim of the nespun vendetta was a 'possum dog belonging to Bill kness. The Harkness family evened up this dire loss by ng out the chief of the Folwell clan. The Folwells were mpt at repartee. They oiled up their squirrel rifles and le it feasible for Bill Harkness to follow his dog to a land ere the 'possums come down when treed without the stroke n ax.

The feud flourished for forty years. Harknesses were shot he plough, through their lamp-lit cabin windows, coming n camp-meetings, asleep, in duello, sober and otherwise, ly and in family groups, prepared and unprepared. Fol- s had the branches of their family tree lopped off in ilar ways, as the traditions of their country prescribed and norized.

y and by the pruning left but a single member of each ily. And then Cal Harkness, probably reasoning that fur- pursuance of the controversy would give a too-decided onal flavor to the feud, suddenly disappeared from the ved Cumberlands, baulking the avenging hand of Sam, ultimate opposing Folwell.

year afterward Sam Folwell learned that his hereditary,

unsuppressed enemy was living in New York City. Sam turned over the big iron wash-pot in the yard, scraped off some of the soot, which he mixed with lard and shined his boots with the compound. He put on his store clothes of butternut dyed black, a white shirt and collar, and packed a carpet-sack with Spartan *lingerie*. He took his squirrel rifle from its hooks but put it back again with a sigh. However ethical and plausible the habit might be in the Cumberlands, perhaps New York would not swallow his pose of hunting squirrels among the skyscrapers along Broadway. An ancient but reliable Colt's revolver that he resurrected from a bureau drawer seemed to proclaim itself the pink of weapons for metropolitan adventure and vengeance. This and a hunting-knife in a leather sheath, Sam packed in the carpet-sack. As he started muleback, for the lowland railroad station the last Folwell turned in his saddle and looked grimly at the little cluster of white-pine slabs in the clump of cedars that marked the Folwell burying-ground.

Sam Folwell arrived in New York in the night. Still moving and living in the free circles of nature, he did not perceive the formidable, pitiless, restless, fierce angles of the great city waiting in the dark to close about the rotundity of his head and brain and mould him to the form of its millions of round-shaped victims. A cabby picked him out of the whirl, as Sam himself had often picked a nut from a bed of wind-tossed autumn leaves, and whisked him away to a hotel commensurate to his boots and carpet-sack.

On the next morning the last of the Folwells made his sortie into the city that sheltered the last Harkness. The Colt was thrust beneath his coat and secured by a narrow leather belt; the hunting-knife hung between his shoulder-blades with the haft an inch below his coat collar. He knew this much —that Cal Harkness drove an express wagon somewhere in that town, and that he, Sam Folwell, had come to kill him.

ıd as he stepped upon the sidewalk the red came into his e and the feud-hate into his heart.

The clamor of the central avenues drew him thitherward. e had half expected to see Cal coming down the street in s shirt-sleeves with a jug and a whip in his hand, just as he ould have seen him in Frankfort or Laurel City. But an hour nt by and Cal did not appear. Perhaps he was waiting in ıbush, to shoot him from a door or a window. Sam kept a arp eye on doors and windows for a while.

About noon the city tired of playing with its mouse and ddenly squeezed him with its straight lines.

Sam Folwell stood where two great, rectangular arteries of e city cross. He looked four ways, and saw the world hurled om its orbit and reduced by spirit level and tape to an edged d cornered plane. All life moved on tracks, in grooves, ac-rding to system, within boundaries, by rote. The root of e was the cube root; the measure of existence was square easure. People streamed by in straight rows; the horrible din d crash stupefied him.

Sam leaned against the sharp corner of a stone building. ose faces passed him by thousands, and none of them were rned toward him. A sudden foolish fear that he had died d was a spirit, and that they could not see him, seized him. ıd then the city smote him with loneliness.

A fat man dropped out of the stream and stood a few feet tant, waiting for his car. Sam crept to his side and shouted ove the tumult into his ear:

"The Rankinses' hogs weighed more'n ourn a whole passel, t the mash in thar neighborhood was a fine chance better ın what it was down——"

The fat man moved away unostentatiously, and bought ısted chestnuts to cover his alarm.

Sam felt the need of a drop of mountain dew. Across the eet men passed in and out through swinging doors. Brief

glimpses could be had of a glistening bar and its bedeckings. The feudist crossed and essayed to enter. Again had Art eliminated the familiar circle. Sam's hand found no door-knob—it slid, in vain, over a rectangular brass plate and polished oak with nothing even so large as a pin's head upon which his fingers might close.

Abashed, reddened, heartbroken, he walked away from the bootless door and sat upon a step. A locust club tickled him in the ribs.

"Take a walk for yourself," said the policeman. "You've been loafing around here long enough."

At the next corner a shrill whistle sounded in Sam's ear. He wheeled around and saw a black-browed villain scowling at him over peanuts heaped on a steaming machine. He started across the street. An immense engine, running without mules, with the voice of a bull and the smell of a smoky lamp, whizzed past, grazing his knee. A cab-driver bumped him with a hub and explained to him that kind words were invented to be used on other occasions. A motorman clanged his bell wildly and, for once in his life, corroborated a cab-driver. A large lady in a changeable silk waist dug an elbow into his back, and a newsy pensively pelted him with banana rinds, murmuring, "I hates to do it—but if anybody seen me let it pass!"

Cal Harkness, his day's work over and his express wagon stabled, turned the sharp edge of the building that, by the cheek of architects, is modelled upon a safety razor. Out of the mass of hurrying people his eye picked up, three yards away, the surviving bloody and implacable foe of his kith and kin.

He stopped short and wavered for a moment, being unarmed and sharply surprised. But the keen mountaineer's eye of Sam Folwell had picked him out.

There was a sudden spring, a ripple in the stream of assers-by and the sound of Sam's voice crying:

"Howdy, Cal! I'm durned glad to see ye."

And in the angles of Broadway, Fifth Avenue, and Twenty-hird Street the Cumberland feudists shook hands.

Transients in Arcadia

THERE IS A HOTEL on Broadway that has escaped discovery y the summer-resort promoters. It is deep and wide and cool. ts rooms are finished in dark oak of a low temperature. Iome-made breezes and deep-green shrubbery give it the de-ghts without the inconveniences of the Adirondacks. One an mount its broad staircases or glide dreamily upward in its ërial elevators, attended by guides in brass buttons, with a erene joy that Alpine climbers have never attained. There is chef in its kitchen who will prepare for you brook trout bet-er than the White Mountains ever served, sea food that ould turn Old Point Comfort—"by Gad, sah!"—green with nvy, and Maine venison that would melt the official heart of ne game warden.

A few have found out this oasis in the July desert of Man-attan. During that month you will see the hotel's reduced rray of guests scattered luxuriously about in the cool twi-ght of its lofty dining-room, gazing at one another across ne snowy waste of unoccupied tables, silently congratulatory. Superfluous, watchful, pneumatically moving waiters hover ear, supplying every want before it is expressed. The tem-erature is perpetual April. The ceiling is painted in water olors to counterfeit a summer sky across which delicate

clouds drift and do not vanish as those of nature do to our regret.

The pleasing, distant roar of Broadway is transformed in the imagination of the happy guests to the noise of a waterfall filling the woods with its restful sound. At every strange footstep the guests turn an anxious ear, fearful lest their retreat be discovered and invaded by the restless pleasure-seekers who are forever hounding Nature to her deepest lairs.

Thus in the depopulated caravansary the little band of connoisseurs jealously hide themselves during the heated season, enjoying to the uttermost the delights of mountain and seashore that art and skill have gathered and served to them.

In this July came to the hotel one whose card that she sent to the clerk for her name to be registered read "Mme. Héloise D'Arcy Beaumont."

Madame Beaumont was a guest such as the Hotel Lotus loved. She possessed the fine air of the élite, tempered and sweetened by a cordial graciousness that made the hotel employés her slaves. Bell-boys fought for the honor of answering her ring; the clerks, but for the question of ownership, would have deeded to her the hotel and its contents; the other guests regarded her as the final touch of feminine exclusiveness and beauty that rendered the entourage perfect.

This super-excellent guest rarely left the hotel. Her habits were consonant with the customs of the discriminating patrons of the Hotel Lotus. To enjoy that delectable hostelry one must forego the city as though it were leagues away. By night a brief excursion to the nearby roofs is in order; but during the torrid day one remains in the umbrageous fastnesses of the Lotus as a trout hangs poised in the pellucid sanctuaries of his favorite pool.

Though alone in the Hotel Lotus, Madame Beaumont preserved the state of a queen whose loneliness was of position only. She breakfasted at ten, a cool, sweet, leisurely

delicate being who glowed softly in the dimness like a jasmine flower in the dusk.

But at dinner was Madame's glory at its height. She wore a gown as beautiful and immaterial as the mist from an unseen cataract in a mountain gorge. The nomenclature of this gown is beyond the guess of the scribe. Always pale-red roses reposed against its lace-garnished front. It was a gown that the head-waiter viewed with respect and met at the door. You thought of Paris when you saw it, and maybe of mysterious countesses, and certainly of Versailles and rapiers and Mrs. Fiske and rouge-et-noir. There was an untraceable rumor in the Hotel Lotus that Madame was a cosmopolite, and that she was pulling with her slender white hands certain strings between the nations in the favor of Russia. Being a citizeness of the world's smoothest roads it was small wonder that she was quick to recognize in the refined purlieus of the Hotel Lotus the most desirable spot in America for a restful sojourn during the heat of midsummer.

On the third day of Madame Beaumont's residence in the hotel a young man entered and registered himself as a guest. His clothing—to speak of his points in approved order—was quietly in the mode; his features good and regular; his expression that of a poised and sophisticated man of the world. He informed the clerk that he would remain three or four days, inquired concerning the sailing of European steamships, and sank into the blissful inanition of the nonpareil hotel with the contented air of a traveller in his favorite inn.

The young man—not to question the veracity of the register—was Harold Farrington. He drifted into the exclusive and calm current of life in the Lotus so tactfully and silently that not a ripple alarmed his fellow-seekers after rest. He ate in the Lotus and of its patronym, and was lulled into blissful peace with the other fortunate mariners. In one day he acquired his table and his waiter and the fear lest the panting

chasers after repose that kept Broadway warm should pounce upon and destroy this contiguous but covert haven.

After dinner on the next day after the arrival of Harold Farrington Madame Beaumont dropped her handkerchief in passing out. Mr. Farrington recovered and returned it without the effusiveness of a seeker after acquaintance.

Perhaps there was a mystic freemasonry between the discriminating guests of the Lotus. Perhaps they were drawn one to another by the fact of their common good fortune in discovering the acme of summer resorts in a Broadway hotel. Words delicate in courtesy and tentative in departure from formality passed between the two. And, as if in the expedient atmosphere of a real summer resort, an acquaintance grew, flowered and fructified on the spot as does the mystic plant of the conjuror. For a few moments they stood on a balcony upon which the corridor ended, and tossed the feathery ball of conversation.

"One tires of the old resorts," said Madame Beaumont with a faint but sweet smile. "What is the use to fly to the mountains or the seashore to escape noise and dust when the very people that make both follow us there?"

"Even on the ocean," remarked Farrington sadly, "the Philistines be upon you. The most exclusive steamers are getting to be scarcely more than ferry boats. Heaven help us when the summer resorter discovers that the Lotus is further away from Broadway than Thousand Islands or Mackinac."

"I hope our secret will be safe for a week, anyhow," said Madame, with a sigh and a smile. "I do not know where we would go if they should descend upon the dear Lotus. I know of but one place so delightful in summer, and that is the castle of Count Polinski, in the Ural Mountains."

"I hear that Baden-Baden and Cannes are almost deserted this season," said Farrington. "Year by year the old resorts fall

n disrepute. Perhaps many others, like ourselves, are seeking ut the quiet nooks that are overlooked by the majority."

"I promise myself three days more of this delicious rest," aid Madame Beaumont. "On Monday the *Cedric* sails."

Harold Farrington's eyes proclaimed his regret. "I too must eave on Monday," he said, "but I do not go abroad."

Madame Beaumont shrugged one round shoulder in a oreign gesture.

"One cannot hide here forever, charming though it may be. he château has been in preparation for me longer than a nonth. Those house parties that one must give—what a nui- nce! But I shall never forget my week in the Hotel Lotus."

"Nor shall I," said Farrington in a low voice, "and I shall ever *forgive* the *Cedric*."

On Sunday evening, three days afterward, the two sat at little table on the same balcony. A discreet waiter brought es and small glasses of claret cup.

Madame Beaumont wore the same beautiful evening gown at she had worn each day at dinner. She seemed thought- l. Near her hand on the table lay a small chatelaine purse. fter she had eaten her ice she opened the purse and took ut a one-dollar bill.

"Mr. Farrington," she said, with the smile that had won e Hotel Lotus, "I want to tell you something. I'm going leave before breakfast in the morning, because I've got to back to my work. I'm behind the hosiery counter at Casey's lammoth Store, and my vacation's up at eight o'clock to- orrow. That paper dollar is the last cent I'll see till I draw y eight dollars salary next Saturday night. You're a real gen- eman, and you've been good to me, and I wanted to tell ou before I went.

"I've been saving up out of my wages for a year just for is vacation. I wanted to spend one week like a lady if I ever do another one. I wanted to get up when I please in-

stead of having to crawl out at seven every morning; and I wanted to live on the best and be waited on and ring bells for things just like rich folks do. Now I've done it, and I've had the happiest time I ever expect to have in my life. I'm going back to my work and my little hall bedroom satisfied for another year. I wanted to tell you about it, Mr. Farrington, because I—I thought you kind of liked me, and I—I liked you. But, oh, I couldn't help deceiving you up till now, for it was all just like a fairy tale to me. So I talked about Europe and the things I've read about in other countries, and made you think I was a great lady.

"This dress I've got on—it's the only one I have that's fit to wear—I bought from O'Dowd & Levinsky on the instalment plan.

"Seventy-five dollars is the price, and it was made to measure. I paid $10 down, and they're to collect $1 a week till it's paid for. That'll be about all I have to say, Mr. Farrington, except that my name is Mamie Siviter instead of Madame Beaumont, and I thank you for your attentions. This dollar will pay the instalment due on the dress tomorrow. I guess I'll go up to my room now."

Harold Farrington listened to the recital of the Lotus's loveliest guest with an impassive countenance. When she had concluded he drew a small book like a checkbook from his coat pocket. He wrote upon a blank form in this with a stub of pencil, tore out the leaf, tossed it over to his companion and took up the paper dollar.

"I've got to go to work, too, in the morning," he said, "and I might as well begin now. There's a receipt for the dollar instalment. I've been a collector for O'Dowd & Levinsky for three years. Funny, ain't it, that you and me both had the same idea about spending our vacation? I've always wanted to put up at a swell hotel, and I saved up out of my twenty

er, and did it. Say, Mame, how about a trip to Coney Saturday night on the boat—what?"

The face of the pseudo Madame Héloise D'Arcy Beaumont beamed.

"Oh, you bet I'll go, Mr. Farrington. The store closes at welve on Saturdays. I guess Coney'll be all right even if we lid spend a week with the swells."

Below the balcony the sweltering city growled and buzzed n the July night. Inside the Hotel Lotus the tempered, cool hadows reigned, and the solicitous waiter single-footed near he low windows, ready at a nod to serve Madame and her scort.

At the door of the elevator Farrington took his leave, and Madame Beaumont made her last ascent. But before they eached the noiseless cage he said: "Just forget that 'Harold Farrington,' will you?—McManus is the name—James McManus. Some call me Jimmy."

"Good-night, Jimmy," said Madame.

The Trimmed Lamp

Of course there are two sides to the question. Let us look at he other. We often hear "shop-girls" spoken of. No such persons exist. There are girls who work in shops. They make heir living that way. But why turn their occupation into an djective? Let us be fair. We do not refer to the girls who ive on Fifth Avenue as "marriage-girls."

Lou and Nancy were chums. They came to the big city to nd work because there was not enough to eat at their homes o go around. Nancy was nineteen; Lou was twenty. Both

were pretty, active country girls who had no ambition to go on the stage.

The little cherub that sits up aloft guided them to a cheap and respectable boarding-house. Both found positions and became wage-earners. They remained chums. It is at the end of six months that I would beg you to step forward and be introduced to them. Meddlesome Reader: My Lady Friends Miss Nancy and Miss Lou. While you are shaking hands please take notice—cautiously—of their attire. Yes, cautiously for they are as quick to resent a stare as a lady in a box at the horse show is.

Lou is a piece-work ironer in a hand laundry. She is clothed in a badly fitting purple dress, and her hat plume is four inches too long; but her ermine muff and scarf cost $25, and its fellow beasts will be ticketed in the windows at $7.98 before the season is over. Her cheeks are pink, and her light blue eyes bright. Contentment radiates from her.

Nancy you would call a shop-girl—because you have the habit. There is no type; but a perverse generation is always seeking a type; so this is what the type should be. She has the high-ratted pompadour and the exaggerated straight-front. Her skirt is shoddy, but has the correct flare. No furs protect her against the bitter spring air, but she wears her short broadcloth jacket as jauntily as though it were Persian lamb. On her face and in her eyes, remorseless type-seeker, is the typical shop-girl expression. It is a look of silent but contemptuous revolt against cheated womanhood; of sad prophecy of the vengeance to come. When she laughs her loudest the look is still there. The same look can be seen in the eyes of Russian peasants; and those of us left will see it some day on Gabriel's face when he comes to blow us up. It is a look that should wither and abash man; but he has been known to smirk at it and offer flowers—with a string tied to them.

Now lift your hat and come away, while you receive Lou

heery "See you again," and the sardonic, sweet smile of Nancy that seems, somehow, to miss you and go fluttering ke a white moth up over the housetops to the stars.

The two waited on the corner for Dan. Dan was Lou's eady company. Faithful? Well, he was on hand when Mary ould have had to hire a dozen subpœna servers to find her mb.

"Ain't you cold, Nancy?" said Lou. "Say, what a chump you re for working in that old store for $8 a week! I made $18.50 st week. Of course ironing ain't as swell work as selling lace ehind a counter, but it pays. None of us ironers make less an $10. And I don't know that it's any less respectful work, ither."

"You can have it," said Nancy, with uplifted nose. "I'll take y eight a week and hall bedroom. I like to be among nice ings and swell people. And look what a chance I've got! Vhy, one of our glove girls married a Pittsburgh—a steel aker, or blacksmith or something—the other day worth a illion dollars. I'll catch a swell myself some time. I ain't agging on my looks or anything; but I'll take my chances here there's big prizes offered. What show would a girl have n a laundry?"

"Why, that's where I met Dan," said Lou, triumphantly. He came in for his Sunday shirt and collars and saw me at he first board, ironing. We all try to get to work at the first oard. Ella Maginnis was sick that day, and I had her place. He said he noticed my arms first, how round and white they as. I had my sleeves rolled up. Some nice fellows come into undries. You can tell 'em by their bringing their clothes in uit cases, and turning in the door sharp and sudden."

"How can you wear a waist like that, Lou?" said Nancy, azing down at the offending article with sweet scorn in her eavy-lidded eyes. "It shows fierce taste."

"This waist?" said Lou, with wide-eyed indignation. "Why,

I paid $16 for this waist. It's worth twenty-five. A woman left it to be laundered, and never called for it. The boss sold it to me. It's got yards and yards of hand embroidery on it. Better talk about that ugly, plain thing you've got on."

"This ugly, plain thing," said Nancy, calmly, "was copied from one that Mrs. Van Alstyne Fisher was wearing. The girls say her bill in the store last year was $12,000. I made mine, myself. It cost me $1.50. Ten feet away you couldn't tell it from hers."

"Oh, well," said Lou, good-naturedly, "if you want to starve and put on airs, go ahead. But I'll take my job and good wages; and after hours give me something as fancy and attractive to wear as I am able to buy."

But just then Dan came—a serious young man with a ready-made necktie, who had escaped the city's brand of frivolity—an electrician earning $30 per week who looked upon Lou with the sad eyes of Romeo, and thought her embroidered waist a web in which any fly should delight to be caught.

"My friend, Mr. Owens—shake hands with Miss Danforth," said Lou.

"I'm mighty glad to know you, Miss Danforth," said Dan with outstretched hand. "I've heard Lou speak of you so often."

"Thanks," said Nancy, touching his fingers with the tips of her cool ones, "I've heard her mention you—a few times."

Lou giggled.

"Did you get that handshake from Mrs. Van Alstyne Fisher, Nance?" she asked.

"If I did, you can feel safe in copying it," said Nancy.

"Oh, I couldn't use it at all. It's too stylish for me. It's intended to set off diamond rings, that high shake is. Wait till I get a few and then I'll try it."

"Learn it first," said Nancy, wisely, "and you'll be more ely to get the rings."

"Now, to settle this argument," said Dan, with his ready, eerful smile, "let me make a proposition. As I can't take th of you up to Tiffany's and do the right thing, what do u say to a little vaudeville? I've got the tickets. How about oking at stage diamonds since we can't shake hands with e real sparklers?"

The faithful squire took his place close to the curb; Lou xt, a little peacocky in her bright and pretty clothes; Nancy the inside, slender, and soberly clothed as the sparrow, but th the true Van Alstyne Fisher walk—thus they set out for eir evening's moderate diversion.

I do not suppose that many look upon a great department ore as an educational institution. But the one in which ncy worked was something like that to her. She was sur-nded by beautiful things that breathed of taste and refine-ent. If you live in an atmosphere of luxury, luxury is yours nether your money pays for it, or another's.

The people she served were mostly women whose dress, nners, and position in the social world were quoted as terions. From them Nancy began to take toll—the best from ch according to her view.

From one she would copy and practise a gesture, from an-ner an eloquent lifting of an eyebrow, from others, a man-r of walking, of carrying a purse, of smiling, of greeting a end, of addressing "inferiors in station." From her best be-ed model, Mrs. Van Alstyne Fisher, she made requisition that excellent thing, a soft, low voice as clear as silver and perfect in articulation as the notes of a thrush. Suffused in e aura of this high social refinement and good breeding, it s impossible for her to escape a deeper effect of it. As good bits are said to be better than good principles, so, perhaps, od manners are better than good habits. The teachings of

your parents may not keep alive your New England co science; but if you sit on a straight-back chair and repeat th words "prisms and pilgrims" forty times the devil will fl from you. And when Nancy spoke in the Van Alstyne Fish tones she felt the thrill of *noblesse oblige* to her very bones.

There was another source of learning in the great depar mental school. Whenever you see three or four shop-gir gather in a bunch and jingle their wire bracelets as an a companiment to apparently frivolous conversation, do n think that they are there for the purpose of criticizing th way Ethel does her back hair. The meeting may lack the di nity of the deliberative bodies of man; but it has all the im portance of the occasion on which Eve and her first daught first put their heads together to make Adam understand h proper place in the household. It is Woman's Conference f Common Defense and Exchange of Strategical Theories Attack and Repulse upon and against the World, which a Stage, and Man, its Audience who Persists in Throwi Bouquets Thereupon. Woman, the most helpless of th young of any animal—with the fawn's grace but without i fleetness; with the bird's beauty but without its power flight; with the honey-bee's burden of sweetness but witho its—— Oh, let's drop that simile—some of us may have be stung.

During this council of war they pass weapons one to a other, and exchange stratagems that each has devised an formulated out of the tactics of life.

"I says to 'im," says Sadie, "ain't you the fresh thing! Wh do you suppose I am, to be addressing such a remark to m And what do you think he says back to me?"

The heads, brown, black, flaxen, red, and yellow bob t gether; the answer is given; and the parry to the thrust is d cided upon, to be used by each thereafter in passages-at-arm with the common enemy, man.

Thus Nancy learned the art of defense; and to women successful defense means victory.

The curriculum of a department store is a wide one. Perps no other college could have fitted her as well for her e's ambition—the drawing of a matrimonial prize.

Her station in the store was a favored one. The music om was near enough for her to hear and become familiar th the works of the best composers—at least to acquire the miliarity that passed for appreciation in the social world in ıich she was vaguely trying to set a tentative and aspiring ot. She absorbed the educating influence of art wares, of stly and dainty fabrics, of adornments that are almost culre to women.

The other girls soon became aware of Nancy's ambition. Iere comes your millionaire, Nancy," they would call to her ıenever any man who looked the rôle approached her unter. It got to be a habit of men, who were hanging about ıile their women folk were shopping, to stroll over to the ndkerchief counter and dawdle over the cambric squares. ancy's imitation high-bred air and genuine dainty beauty ıs what attracted. Many men thus came to display their ıces before her. Some of them may have been millionaires; hers were certainly no more than their sedulous apes. ancy learned to discriminate. There was a window at the d of the handkerchief counter; and she could see the rows vehicles waiting for the shoppers in the street below. She ɔked and perceived that automobiles differ as well as do eir owners.

Once a fascinating gentleman bought four dozen handrchiefs, and wooed her across the counter with a King ɔphetua air. When he had gone one of the girls said:

"What's wrong, Nance, that you didn't warm up to that low? He looks the swell article, all right, to me."

"Him?" said Nancy, with her coolest, sweetest, most imper-

sonal, Van Alstyne Fisher smile; "not for mine. I saw hi drive up outside. A 12 H. P. machine and an Irish chau feur! And you saw what kind of handkerchiefs he bought silk! And he's got dactylis on him. Give me the real thing nothing, if you please."

Two of the most "refined" women in the store—a forela and a cashier—had a few "swell gentlemen friends" wi whom they now and then dined. Once they included Nan in an invitation. The dinner took place in a spectacular ca whose tables are engaged for New Year's Eve a year in a vance. There were two "gentlemen friends"—one without a hair on his head—high living ungrew it; and we can prove —the other a young man whose worth and sophistication impressed upon you in two convincing ways—he swore th all the wine was corked; and he wore diamond cuff buttor This young man perceived irresistible excellencies in Nanc His taste ran to shop-girls; and here was one that added t voice and manners of his high social world to the frank charms of her own caste. So, on the following day, he a peared in the store and made her a serious proposal of ma riage over a box of hemstitched, grass-bleached Irish liner Nancy declined. A brown pompadour ten feet away had be using her eyes and ears. When the rejected suitor had go she heaped carboys of upbraidings and horror upon Nancy head.

"What a terrible little fool you are! That fellow's a m lionaire—he's a nephew of old Van Skittles himself. And was talking on the level, too. Have you gone crazy, Nance?"

"Have I?" said Nancy. "I didn't take him, did I? He is a millionaire so hard that you could notice it, anyhow. H family only allows him $20,000 a year to spend. The ba headed fellow was guying him about it the other night supper."

The brown pompadour came nearer and narrowed her ey

Say, what do you want?" she inquired, in a voice hoarse lack of chewing-gum. "Ain't that enough for you? Do you nt to be a Mormon, and marry Rockefeller and Gladstone wie and the King of Spain and the whole bunch? Ain't ,000 a year good enough for you?"

Nancy flushed a little under the level gaze of the black, llow eyes.

It wasn't altogether the money, Carrie," she explained. is friend caught him in a rank lie the other night at din-. It was about some girl he said he hadn't been to the ater with. Well, I can't stand a liar. Put everything to-her—I don't like him; and that settles it. When I sell out not going to be on any bargain day. I've got to have some ng that sits up in a chair like a man, anyhow. Yes, I'm king out for a catch; but it's got to be able to do something re than make a noise like a toy bank."

The physiopathic ward for yours!" said the brown pompa-ur, walking away.

These high ideas, if not ideals—Nancy continued to culti-e on $8 per week. She bivouacked on the trail of the great nown "catch" eating her dry bread and tightening her t day by day. On her face was the faint, soldierly, sweet, n smile of the preordained man-hunter. The store was her est; and many times she raised her rifle at game that med broad-antlered and big; but always some deep unerr-instinct—perhaps of the huntress, perhaps of the woman ade her hold her fire and take up the trail again.

Lou flourished in the laundry. Out of her $18.50 per week paid $6 for her room and board. The rest went mainly clothes. Her opportunities for bettering her taste and man-s were few compared with Nancy's. In the steaming laun-there was nothing but work, work and her thoughts of evening pleasures to come. Many costly and showy fabrics sed under her iron; and it may be that her growing fond-

ness for dress was thus transmitted to her through the co ducting metal.

When the day's work was over Dan awaited her outsid her faithful shadow in whatever light she stood.

Sometimes he cast an honest and troubled glance at Lou clothes that increased in conspicuity rather than in style; b this was no disloyalty; he deprecated the attention they call to her in the streets.

And Lou was no less faithful to her chum. There was law that Nancy should go with them on whatsoever outin they might take. Dan bore the extra burden heartily and good cheer. It might be said that Lou furnished the col Nancy the tone, and Dan the weight of the distraction-seeki trio. The escort, in his neat but obviously ready-made su his ready-made tie and unfailing, genial, ready-made w never startled or clashed. He was of that good kind that y are likely to forget while they are present, but remember d tinctly after they are gone.

To Nancy's superior taste the flavor of these ready-ma pleasures was sometimes a little bitter: but she was youn and youth is a gourmand, when it cannot be a gourmet.

"Dan is always wanting me to marry him right away," L told her once. "But why should I? I'm independent. I c do as I please with the money I earn; and he never wou agree for me to keep on working afterward. And say, Nanc what do you want to stick to that old store for, and half star and half dress yourself? I could get you a place in the laund right now if you'd come. It seems to me that you could ford to be a little less stuck-up if you could make a good de more money."

"I don't think I'm stuck-up, Lou," said Nancy, "but rather live on half rations and stay where I am. I suppose I' got the habit. It's the chance that I want. I don't expect be always behind a counter. I'm learning something n

ery day. I'm right up against refined and rich people all
e time—even if I do only wait on them; and I'm not missing
ıy pointers that I see passing around."

"Caught your millionaire yet?" asked Lou with her teasing
ugh.

"I haven't selected one yet," answered Nancy. "I've been
oking them over."

"Goodness! the idea of picking over 'em! Don't you ever
t one get by you, Nance—even if he's a few dollars shy.
ut of course you're joking—millionaires don't think about
orking girls like us."

"It might be better for them if they did," said Nancy, with
ol wisdom. "Some of us could teach them how to take care
their money."

"If one was to speak to me," laughed Lou, "I know I'd have
duck-fit."

"That's because you don't know any. The only difference
tween swells and other people is you have to watch 'em
oser. Don't you think that red silk lining is just a little bit
o bright for that coat, Lou?"

Lou looked at the plain, dull olive jacket of her friend.

"Well, no, I don't—but it may seem so beside that faded-
oking thing you've got on."

"This jacket," said Nancy, complacently, "has exactly the
ıt and fit of one that Mrs. Van Alstyne Fisher was wearing
e other day. The material cost me $3.98. I suppose hers
ost about $100 more."

"Oh, well," said Lou, lightly, "it don't strike me as mil-
ıaire bait. Shouldn't wonder if I catch one before you do,
ıyway."

Truly it would have taken a philosopher to decide upon
e values of the theories held by the two friends. Lou, lack-
g that certain pride and fastidiousness that keeps stores and
sks filled with girls working for the barest living, thumped

away gaily with her iron in the noisy and stifling laundry. He wages supported her even beyond the point of comfort; s that her dress profited until sometimes she cast a sidelon glance of impatience at the neat but inelegant apparel of Da —Dan the constant, the immutable, the undeviating.

As for Nancy, her case was one of tens of thousands. Sil and jewels and laces and ornaments and the perfume an music of the fine world of good-breeding and taste—thes were made for woman; they are her equitable portion. Le her keep near them if they are a part of life to her, and i she will. She is no traitor to herself, as Esau was; for sh keeps her birthright and the pottage she earns is often ver scant.

In this atmosphere Nancy belonged; and she throve in i and ate her frugal meals and schemed over her cheap dresse with a determined and contented mind. She already knev woman; and she was studying man, the animal, both as t his habits and eligibility. Some day she would bring dow the game that she wanted; but she promised herself it woul be what seemed to her the biggest and the best, and nothin smaller.

Thus she kept her lamp trimmed and burning to receiv the bridegroom when he should come.

But another lesson she learned, perhaps unconsciously. He standard of values began to shift and change. Sometimes th dollar-mark grew blurred in her mind's eye, and shaped itse into letters that spelled such words as "truth" and "honor and now and then just "kindness." Let us make a likeness o one who hunts the moose or elk in some mighty wood. H sees a little dell, mossy and embowered, where a rill trickle babbling to him of rest and comfort. At these times th spear of Nimrod himself grows blunt.

So, Nancy wondered sometimes if Persian lamb was alway quoted at its market value by the hearts that it covered.

One Thursday evening Nancy left the store and turned oss Sixth Avenue westward to the laundry. She was ex-ted to go with Lou and Dan to a musical comedy.

Dan was just coming out of the laundry when she arrived. ere was a queer, strained look on his face.

'I thought I would drop around to see if they had heard m her," he said.

'Heard from who?" asked Nancy. "Isn't Lou there?"

'I thought you knew," said Dan. "She hasn't been here or the house where she lived since Monday. She moved all things from there. She told one of the girls in the laundry might be going to Europe."

'Hasn't anybody seen her anywhere?" asked Nancy.

Dan looked at her with his jaws set grimly, and a steely am in his steady gray eyes.

'They told me in the laundry," he said, harshly, "that they her pass yesterday—in an automobile. With one of the lionaires, I suppose, that you and Lou were forever busy- your brains about."

For the first time Nancy quailed before a man. She laid her nd that trembled slightly on Dan's sleeve.

'You've no right to say such a thing to me, Dan—as if I d anything to do with it!"

'I didn't mean it that way," said Dan, softening. He fum-d in his vest pocket.

'I've got the tickets for the show to-night," he said, with allant show of lightness. "If you——"

Nancy admired pluck whenever she saw it.

'I'll go with you, Dan," she said.

Three months went by before Nancy saw Lou again.

At twilight one evening the shop-girl was hurrying home ng the border of a little quiet park. She heard her name led, and wheeled about in time to catch Lou rushing into arms.

After the first embrace they drew their heads back as se pents do, ready to attack or to charm, with a thousand que tions trembling on their swift tongues. And then Nan noticed that prosperity had descended upon Lou, manifesti itself in costly furs, flashing gems, and creations of the tailo art.

"You little fool!" cried Lou, loudly and affectionately. see you are still working in that store, and as shabby as eve And how about that big catch you were going to make—not ing doing yet, I suppose?"

And then Lou looked, and saw that something better tha prosperity had descended upon Nancy—something that sho brighter than gems in her eyes and redder than a rose in h cheeks, and that danced like electricity anxious to be loos from the tip of her tongue.

"Yes, I'm still in the store," said Nancy, "but I'm going leave it next week. I've made my catch—the biggest catch the world. You won't mind now, Lou, will you?—I'm goi to be married to Dan—to Dan!—he's my Dan now—wh Lou!"

Around the corner of the park strolled one of those ne crop, smooth-faced young policemen that are making t force more endurable—at least to the eye. He saw a wom with an expensive fur coat and diamond-ringed hands crou ing down against the iron fence of the park sobbing turb lently, while a slender, plainly dressed working girl lean close, trying to console her. But the Gibsonian cop, being the new order, passed on, pretending not to notice, for was wise enough to know that these matters are beyond he so far as the power he represents is concerned, though he r the pavement with his nightstick till the sound goes up the furthermost stars.

The Pendulum

GHTY-FIRST STREET—let 'em out, please," yelled the shep-
d in blue.
A flock of citizen sheep scrambled out and another flock
mbled aboard. Ding-ding! The cattle cars of the Man-
tan Elevated rattled away, and John Perkins drifted down
stairway of the station with the released flock.
ohn walked slowly toward his flat. Slowly, because in the
con of his daily life there was no such word as "perhaps."
ere are no surprises awaiting a man who has been married
years and lives in a flat. As he walked John Perkins
phesied to himself with gloomy and downtrodden cyni-
n the foregone conclusions of the monotonous day.
Katy would meet him at the door with a kiss flavored with
l cream and butter-scotch. He would remove his coat, sit
n a macadamized lounge and read, in the evening paper,
Russians and Japs slaughtered by the deadly linotype. For
ner there would be pot roast, a salad flavored with a dress-
warranted not to crack or injure the leather, stewed
barb and the bottle of strawberry marmalade blushing at
certificate of chemical purity on its label. After dinner
y would show him the new patch in her crazy quilt that
iceman had cut for her off the end of his four-in-hand.
half-past seven they would spread newspapers over the
niture to catch the pieces of plastering that fell when the
man in the flat overhead began to take his physical cul-
exercises. Exactly at eight Hickey & Mooney, of the
deville team (unbooked) in the flat across the hall, would
l to the gentle influence of delirium tremens and begin
verturn chairs under the delusion that Hammerstein was

pursuing them with a five-hundred-dollar-a-week contra
Then the gent at the window across the air-shaft would
out his flute; the nightly gas leak would steal forth to fr
in the highways; the dumb-waiter would slip off its troll
the janitor would drive Mrs. Zanowitski's five children o
more across the Yalu; the lady with the champagne shoes a
the Skye terrier would trip downstairs and paste her Thurs
name over her bell and letter-box—and the evening rout
of the Frogmore flats would be under way.

John Perkins knew these things would happen. And
knew that at a quarter past eight he would summon his ne
and reach for his hat, and that his wife would deliver t
speech in a querulous tone:

"Now, where are you going, I'd like to know, John P
kins?"

"Thought I'd drop up to McCloskey's," he would answ
"and play a game or two of pool with the fellows."

Of late such had been John Perkins's habit. At ten
eleven he would return. Sometimes Katy would be asle
sometimes waiting up, ready to melt in the crucible of her
a little more gold plating from the wrought steel chains
matrimony. For these things Cupid will have to answer wh
he stands at the bar of justice with his victims from the Fr
more flats.

To-night John Perkins encountered a tremendous uphea
of the commonplace when he reached his door. No Katy
there with her affectionate, confectionate kiss. The th
rooms seemed in portentous disorder. All about lay her thi
in confusion. Shoes in the middle of the floor, curling to
hair bows, kimonos, powder box, jumbled together on dre
and chairs—this was not Katy's way. With a sinking he
John saw the comb with a curling cloud of her brown h
among its teeth. Some unusual hurry and perturbation m
have possessed her, for she always carefully placed th

bings in the little blue vase on the mantel to be some formed into the coveted feminine "rat."

anging conspicuously to the gas jet by a string was a ed paper. John seized it. It was a note from his wife run- g thus:

R JOHN:

just had a telegram saying mother is very sick. I am going ke the 4:30 train. Brother Sam is going to meet me at the t there. There is cold mutton in the icebox. I hope it isn't quinzy again. Pay the milkman 50 cents. She had it bad last g. Don't forget to write to the company about the gas meter, your good socks are in the top drawer. I will write to-morrow.

Hastily,
KATY.

ever during their two years of matrimony had he and been separated for a night. John read the note over and in a dumbfounded way. Here was a break in a routine had never varied, and it left him dazed.

here on the back of a chair hung, pathetically empty and nless, the red wrapper with black dots that she always wore e getting the meals. Her week-day clothes had been ed here and there in her haste. A little paper bag of her rite butter-scotch lay with its string yet unwound. A daily er sprawled on the floor, gaping rectangularly where a oad time-table had been clipped from it. Everything in room spoke of a loss, of an essence gone, of its soul and departed. John Perkins stood among the dead remains a queer feeling of desolation in his heart.

e began to set the rooms tidy as well as he could. When ouched her clothes a thrill of something like terror went ugh him. He had never thought what existence would be out Katy. She had become so thoroughly annealed into life that she was like the air he breathed—necessary but cely noticed. Now, without warning, she was gone, van-

ished, as completely absent as if she had never existed. C course it would be only for a few days, or at most a wee or two, but it seemed to him as if the very hand of death ha pointed a finger at his secure and uneventful home.

John dragged the cold mutton from the icebox, mad coffee, and sat down to a lonely meal face to face with th strawberry marmalade's shameless certificate of purity. Brigh among withdrawn blessings now appeared to him the ghos of pot roasts and the salad with tan polish dressing. H home was dismantled. A quinzied mother-in-law had knocke his lares and penates sky-high. After his solitary meal Joh sat at a front window.

He did not care to smoke. Outside the city roared to hi to come join in its dance of folly and pleasure. The nig was his. He might go forth unquestioned and thrum th strings of jollity as free as any gay bachelor there. He migh carouse and wander and have his fling until dawn if he like and there would be no wrathful Katy waiting for him, bea ing the chalice that held the dregs of his joy. He might pl pool at McCloskey's with his roistering friends until Auro dimmed the electric bulbs if he chose. The hymeneal strin that had curbed him always when the Frogmore flats ha palled upon him were loosened. Katy was gone.

John Perkins was not accustomed to analyzing his em tions. But as he sat in his Katy-bereft 10 x 12 parlor he h unerringly upon the keynote of his discomfort. He knew no that Katy was necessary to his happiness. His feeling for h lulled into unconsciousness by the dull round of domestici had been sharply stirred by the loss of her presence. Has not been dinned into us by proverb and sermon and fab that we never prize the music till the sweet-voiced bird h flown—or in other no less florid and true utterances?

"I'm a double-dyed dub," mused John Perkins, "the w I've been treating Katy. Off every night playing pool a

ming with the boys instead of staying home with her. poor girl here all alone with nothing to amuse her, and acting that way! John Perkins, you're the worst kind of ine. I'm going to make it up for the little girl. I'll take out and let her see some amusement. And I'll cut out the Closkey gang right from this minute."

es, there was the city roaring outside for John Perkins to e dance in the train of Momus. And at McCloskey's the s were knocking the balls idly into the pockets against the r for the nightly game. But no primrose way nor clicking could woo the remorseful soul of Perkins the bereft. The g that was his, lightly held and half scorned, had been n away from him, and he wanted it. Backward to a cer- man named Adam, whom the cherubim bounced from orchard, could Perkins, the remorseful, trace his descent. ear the right hand of John Perkins stood a chair. On the k of it stood Katy's blue shirtwaist. It still retained some- g of her contour. Midway of the sleeves were fine, indi- al wrinkles made by the movements of her arms in king for his comfort and pleasure. A delicate but impelling of bluebells came from it. John took it and looked long soberly at the unresponsive grenadine. Katy had never unresponsive. Tears:—yes, tears—came into John Per- 's eyes. When she came back things would be different. would make up for all his neglect. What was life without

he door opened. Katy walked in carrying a little hand hel. John stared at her stupidly.

My! I'm glad to get back," said Katy. "Ma wasn't sick to unt to anything. Sam was at the depot, and said she just a little spell, and got all right soon after they telegraphed. took the next train back. I'm just dying for a cup of ee."

obody heard the click and rattle of the cogwheels as the

third-floor-front of the Frogmore flats buzzed its machine back into the Order of Things. A band slipped, a spring w touched, the gear was adjusted and the wheels revolved their old orbit.

John Perkins looked at the clock. It was 8.15. He reach for his hat and walked to the door.

"Now, where are you going, I'd like to know, John P kins?" asked Katy, in a querulous tone.

"Thought I'd drop up to McCloskey's," said John, "a play a game or two of pool with the fellows."

Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen

THERE is one day that is ours. There is one day when all Americans who are not self-made go back to the old ho to eat saleratus biscuits and marvel how much nearer to t porch the old pump looks than it used to. Bless the day. Pre dent Roosevelt gives it to us. We hear some talk of t Puritans, but don't just remember who they were. Bet we c lick 'em, anyhow, if they try to land again. Plymouth Roc Well, that sounds more familiar. Lots of us have had to co down to hens since the Turkey Trust got its work in. somebody in Washington is leaking out advance informati to 'em about these Thanksgiving proclamations.

The big city east of the cranberry bogs has made Than giving Day an institution. The last Thursday in Novem is the only day in the year on which it recognizes the part America lying across the ferries. It is the one day that is pur American. Yes, a day of celebration, exclusively American.

And now for the story which is to prove to you that have traditions on this side of the ocean that are becom

ler at a much rapider rate than those of England are—
anks to our git-up and enterprise.

Stuffy Pete took his seat on the third bench to the right as
u enter Union Square from the east, at the walk opposite
e fountain. Every Thanksgiving Day for nine years he had
ken his seat there promptly at 1 o'clock. For every time he
d done so things had happened to him—Charles Dickensy
ngs that swelled his waistcoat above his heart, and equally
the other side.

But to-day Stuffy Pete's appearance at the annual trysting
ace seemed to have been rather the result of habit than of
e yearly hunger which, as the philanthropists seem to think,
licts the poor at such extended intervals.

Certainly Pete was not hungry. He had just come from a
ast that had left him of his powers barely those of respira-
n and locomotion. His eyes were like two pale gooseberries
nly imbedded in a swollen and gravy-smeared mask of
tty. His breath came in short wheezes; a senatorial roll of
ipose tissue denied a fashionable set to his upturned coat
lar. Buttons that had been sewed upon his clothes by kind
lvation fingers a week before flew like pop-corn, strewing
e earth around him. Ragged he was, with a split shirt front
en to the wishbone; but the November breeze, carrying fine
owflakes, brought him only a grateful coolness. For Stuffy
te was overcharged with the caloric produced by a super-
untiful dinner, beginning with oysters and ending with
m pudding, and including (it seemed to him) all the roast
key and baked potatoes and chicken salad and squash pie
d ice cream in the world. Wherefore he sat, gorged, and
zed upon the world with after-dinner contempt.

The meal had been an unexpected one. He was passing a
brick mansion near the beginning of Fifth Avenue, in
ich lived two old ladies of ancient family and a reverence
traditions. They even denied the existence of New York,

and believed that Thanksgiving Day was declared solely fo Washington Square. One of their traditional habits was t station a servant at the postern gate with orders to admit th first hungry wayfarer that came along after the hour of noo had struck, and banquet him to a finish. Stuffy Pete happene to pass by on his way to the park, and the seneschals gathere him in and upheld the custom of the castle.

After Stuffy Pete had gazed straight before him for te minutes he was conscious of a desire for a more varied fiel of vision. With a tremendous effort he moved his head slowl to the left. And then his eyes bulged out fearfully, and h breath ceased, and the rough-shod ends of his short leg wriggled and rustled on the gravel.

For the Old Gentleman was coming across Fourth Avenu toward his bench.

Every Thanksgiving Day for nine years the Old Gentlema had come there and found Stuffy Pete on his bench. Tha was a thing that the Old Gentleman was trying to make tradition of. Every Thanksgiving Day for nine years he ha found Stuffy there, and had led him to a restaurant an watched him eat a big dinner. They do those things in En land unconsciously. But this is a young country, and nin years is not so bad. The Old Gentleman was a stanch Ame ican patriot, and considered himself a pioneer in America tradition. In order to become picturesque we must keep d doing one thing for a long time without ever letting it g away from us. Something like collecting the weekly dimes industrial insurance. Or cleaning the streets.

The Old Gentleman moved, straight and stately, towa the Institution that he was rearing. Truly, the annual feedi of Stuffy Pete was nothing national in its character, such the Magna Charta or jam for breakfast was in England. B it was a step. It was almost feudal. It showed, at least, that Custom was not impossible to New Y—ahem!—America.

The Old Gentleman was thin and tall and sixty. He was essed all in black, and wore the old-fashioned kind of glasses at won't stay on your nose. His hair was whiter and thinner an it had been last year, and he seemed to make more use his big, knobby cane with the crooked handle.

As his established benefactor came up Stuffy wheezed and uddered like some woman's over-fat pug when a street dog istles up at him. He would have flown, but all the skill of ntos-Dumont could not have separated him from his nch. Well had the myrmidons of the two old ladies done eir work.

"Good morning," said the Old Gentleman. "I am glad to rceive that the vicissitudes of another year have spared you move in health about the beautiful world. For that blessing ne this day of thanksgiving is well proclaimed to each of . If you will come with me, my man, I will provide you th a dinner that should make your physical being accord th the mental."

That is what the Old Gentleman said every time. Every anksgiving Day for nine years. The words themselves al-ost formed an Institution. Nothing could be compared with em except the Declaration of Independence. Always before ey had been music in Stuffy's ears. But now he looked up the Old Gentleman's face with tearful agony in his own. ne fine snow almost sizzled when it fell upon his perspiring ow. But the Old Gentleman shivered a little and turned s back to the wind.

Stuffy had always wondered why the Old Gentleman oke his speech rather sadly. He did not know that it was cause he was wishing every time that he had a son to suc-ed him. A son who would come there after he was gone—son who would stand proud and strong before some subse-ent Stuffy, and say: "In memory of my father." Then it uld be an Institution.

But the Old Gentleman had no relatives. He lived in rented rooms in one of the decayed old family brownstone mansions in one of the quiet streets east of the park. In the winter he raised fuchsias in a little conservatory the size of a steamer trunk. In the spring he walked in the Easter parade. In the summer he lived at a farmhouse in the New Jersey hills, and sat in a wicker armchair, speaking of a butterfly, the ornithoptera amphrisius, that he hoped to find some day. In the autumn he fed Stuffy a dinner. These were the Old Gentleman's occupations.

Stuffy Pete looked up at him for a half minute, stewing and helpless in his own self-pity. The Old Gentleman's eyes were bright with the giving-pleasure. His face was getting more lined each year, but his little black necktie was in as jaunty a bow as ever, and his linen was beautiful and white and his gray mustache was curled gracefully at the ends. And then Stuffy made a noise that sounded like peas bubbling in a pot. Speech was intended; and as the Old Gentleman had heard the sounds nine times before, he rightly construed them into Stuffy's old formula of acceptance.

"Thankee, sir. I'll go with ye, and much obliged. I'm very hungry, sir."

The coma of repletion had not prevented from entering Stuffy's mind the conviction that he was the basis of an Institution. His Thanksgiving appetite was not his own; it belonged by all the sacred rights of established custom, if not by the actual Statute of Limitations, to this kind old gentleman who had preëmpted it. True, America is free; but in order to establish tradition some one must be a repetend—a repeating decimal. The heroes are not all heroes of steel and gold. See one here that wielded only weapons of iron, badly silvered, and tin.

The Old Gentleman led his annual protégé southward to

ıe restaurant, and to the table where the feast had always ccurred. They were recognized.

"Here comes de old guy," said a waiter, "dat blows dat ıme bum to a meal every Thanksgiving."

The Old Gentleman sat across the table glowing like a noked pearl at his corner-stone of future ancient Tradition. he waiters heaped the table with holiday food—and Stuffy, ith a sigh that was mistaken for hunger's expression, raised ıife and fork and carved for himself a crown of imperish- ɔle bay.

No more valiant hero ever fought his way through the nks of an enemy. Turkey, chops, soups, vegetables, pies, dis- ɔpeared before him as fast as they could be served. Gorged early to the uttermost when he entered the restaurant, the nell of food had almost caused him to lose his honor as a entleman, but he rallied like a true knight. He saw the look beneficent happiness on the Old Gentleman's face—a hap- er look than even the fuchsias and the ornithoptera am- ıisius had ever brought to it—and he had not the heart to e it wane.

In an hour Stuffy leaned back with a battle won.

"Thankee kindly, sir," he puffed like a leaky steam pipe; hankee kindly for a hearty meal."

Then he arose heavily with glazed eyes and started toward ıe kitchen. A waiter turned him about like a top, and pointed m toward the door. The Old Gentleman carefully counted ıt $1.30 in silver change, leaving three nickels for the waiter.

They parted as they did each year at the door, the Old entleman going south, Stuffy north.

Around the first corner Stuffy turned, and stood for one inute. Then he seemed to puff out his rags as an owl puffs ıt his feathers, and fell to the sidewalk like a sunstricken ɔrse.

When the ambulance came the young surgeon and the

driver cursed softly at his weight. There was no smell of whiskey to justify a transfer to the patrol wagon, so Stuffy and his two dinners went to the hospital. There they stretched him on a bed and began to test him for strange diseases, with the hope of getting a chance at some problem with the bare steel.

And lo! an hour later another ambulance brought the Old Gentleman. And they laid him on another bed and spoke of appendicitis, for he looked good for the bill.

But pretty soon one of the young doctors met one of the young nurses whose eyes he liked, and stopped to chat with her about the cases.

"That nice old gentleman over there, now," he said, "you wouldn't think that was a case of almost starvation. Proud old family, I guess. He told me he hadn't eaten a thing for three days."

The Making of a New Yorker

Besides many things, Raggles was a poet. He was called a tramp; but that was only an elliptical way of saying that he was a philosopher, an artist, a traveller, a naturalist, and a discoverer. But most of all he was a poet. In all his life he never wrote a line of verse; he lived his poetry. His Odyssey would have been a Limerick, had it been written. But, to linger with the primary proposition, Raggles was a poet.

Raggles's specialty, had he been driven to ink and paper, would have been sonnets to the cities. He studied cities as women study their reflections in mirrors; as children study the glue and sawdust of a dislocated doll; as the men who write about wild animals study the cages in the zoo. A city to Rag

es was not merely a pile of bricks and mortar, peopled by certain number of inhabitants; it was a thing with soul haracteristic and distinct; an individual conglomeration of fe, with its own peculiar essence, flavor, and feeling. Two housand miles to the north and south, east and west, Raggles andered in poetic fervor, taking the cities to his breast. He oted it on dusty roads, or sped magnificently in freight cars, ounting time as of no account. And when he had found the eart of a city and listened to its secret confession, he strayed n, restless, to another. Fickle Raggles!—but perhaps he had ot met the civic corporation that could engage and hold his itical fancy.

Through the ancient poets we have learned that the cities e feminine. So they were to poet Raggles; and his mind rried a concrete and clear conception of the figure that symolized and typified each one that he had wooed.

Chicago seemed to swoop down upon him with a breezy ggestion of Mrs. Partington, plumes and patchouli, and to sturb his rest with a soaring and beautiful song of future romise. But Raggles would awake to a sense of shivering old and a haunting impression of ideals lost in a depressing ura of potato salad and fish.

Thus Chicago affected him. Perhaps there is a vagueness nd inaccuracy in the description; but that is Raggles's fault. e should have recorded his sensations in magazine poems.

Pittsburgh impressed him as the play of "Othello" perrmed in the Russian language in a railroad station by ockstader's minstrels. A royal and generous lady this Pittsurgh, though—homely, hearty, with flushed face, washing e dishes in a silk dress and white kid slippers, and bidding aggles sit before the roaring fireplace and drink champagne ith his pigs' feet and fried potatoes.

New Orleans had simply gazed down upon him from a lcony. He could see her pensive, starry eyes and catch the

flutter of her fan, and that was all. Only once he came face to face with her. It was at dawn, when she was flushing the red bricks of the banquette with a pail of water. She laughed and hummed a chansonette and filled Raggles's shoes with ice-cold water. Allons!

Boston construed herself to the poetic Raggles in an erratic and singular way. It seemed to him that he had drunk cold tea and that the city was a white, cold cloth that had been bound tightly around his brow to spur him to some unknown but tremendous mental effort. And, after all, he came to shovel snow for a livelihood; and the cloth, becoming wet tightened its knots and could not be removed.

Indefinite and unintelligible ideas, you will say; but your disapprobation should be tempered with gratitude, for these are poets' fancies—and suppose you had come upon them in verse!

One day Raggles came and laid siege to the heart of the great city of Manhattan. She was the greatest of all; and he wanted to learn her note in the scale; to taste and appraise and classify and solve and label her and arrange her with the other cities that had given him up the secret of their individuality. And here we cease to be Raggles's translator and become his chronicler.

Raggles landed from a ferry-boat one morning and walked into the core of the town with the blasé air of a cosmopolite. He was dressed with care to play the rôle of an "unidentified man." No country, race, class, clique, union, party clan, or bowling association could have claimed him. His clothing, which had been donated to him piece-meal by citizens of different height, but same number of inches around the heart, was not yet as uncomfortable to his figure as those specimens of raiment, self-measured, that are railroaded to you by transcontinental tailors with a suit case, suspenders, silk handkerchief and pearl studs as a bonus. Without money—as a poet

ould be—but with the ardor of an astronomer discovering a ew star in the chorus of the milky way, or a man who has en ink suddenly flow from his fountain pen, Raggles wan- ered into the great city.

Late in the afternoon he drew out of the roar and commo- on with a look of dumb terror on his countenance. He was efeated, puzzled, discomfited, frightened. Other cities had een to him as long primer to read; as country maidens uickly to fathom; as send-price-of-subscription-with-answer buses to solve; as oyster cocktails to swallow; but here was ne as cold, glittering, serene, impossible as a four-carat dia- ond in a window to a lover outside fingering damply in his ocket his ribbon-counter salary.

The greetings of the other cities he had known—their omespun kindliness, their human gamut of rough charity, iendly curses, garrulous curiosity, and easily estimated cre- ility or indifference. This city of Manhattan gave him no ue; it was walled against him. Like a river of adamant it owed past him in the streets. Never an eye was turned upon m; no voice spoke to him. His heart yearned for the clap Pittsburgh's sooty hand on his shoulder; for Chicago's enacing but social yawp in his ear; for the pale and elee- osynary stare through the Bostonian eyeglass—even for the ecipitate but unmalicious boot-toe of Louisville or St. ouis.

On Broadway Raggles, successful suitor of many cities, ood, bashful, like any country swain. For the first time he perienced the poignant humiliation of being ignored. And nen he tried to reduce this brilliant, swiftly changing, ice- ld city to a formula he failed utterly. Poet though he was, offered him no color similes, no points of comparison, no w in its polished facets, no handle by which he could hold up and view its shape and structure, as he familiarly and ten contemptuously had done with other towns. The houses

were interminable ramparts loopholed for defence; the peo ple were bright but bloodless spectres passing in sinister and selfish array.

The thing that weighed heaviest on Raggles's soul and clogged his poet's fancy was the spirit of absolute egotism that seemed to saturate the people as toys are saturated with paint. Each one that he considered appeared a monster of abominable and insolent conceit. Humanity was gone from them; they were toddling idols of stone and varnish, worship ping themselves and greedy for though oblivious of worship from their fellow graven images. Frozen, cruel, implacable impervious, cut to an identical pattern, they hurried on their ways like statues brought by some miracle to motion, while soul and feeling lay unaroused in the reluctant marble.

Gradually Raggles became conscious of certain types. One was an elderly gentleman with a snow-white, short beard pink, unwrinkled face, and stony, sharp blue eyes, attired in the fashion of a gilded youth, who seemed to personify the city's wealth, ripeness and frigid unconcern. Another type was a woman, tall, beautiful, clear as a steel engraving, goddess like, calm, clothed like the princesses of old, with eyes as coldly blue as the reflection of sunlight on a glacier. And an other was a by-product of this town of marionettes—a broad swaggering, grim, threateningly sedate fellow, with a jowl as large as a harvested wheat field, the complexion of a baptized infant, and the knuckles of a prize-fighter. This type leaned against cigar signs and viewed the world with frappéd con tumely.

A poet is a sensitive creature, and Raggles soon shriveled in the bleak embrace of the undecipherable. The chill sphinx-like, ironical, illegible, unnatural, ruthless expression of the city left him downcast and bewildered. Had it no heart? Better the woodpile, the scolding of vinegar-faced housewives at back doors, the kindly spleen of bartenders be

ind provincial free-lunch counters, the amiable truculence of ural constables, the kicks, arrests, and happy-go-lucky chances f the other vulgar, loud, crude cities than this freezing eartlessness.

Raggles summoned his courage and sought alms from the opulace. Unheeding, regardless, they passed on without the ink of an eyelash to testify that they were conscious of his xistence. And then he said to himself that this fair but pitiless ity of Manhattan was without a soul; that its inhabitants were annikins moved by wires and springs, and that he was alone n a great wilderness.

Raggles started to cross the street. There was a blast, a roar, hissing and a crash as something struck him and hurled im over and over six yards from where he had been. As he as coming down like the stick of a rocket the earth and all he cities thereof turned to a fractured dream.

Raggles opened his eyes. First an odor made itself known to im—an odor of the earliest spring flowers of Paradise. And nen a hand soft as a falling petal touched his brow. Bending ver him was the woman clothed like the princess of old, ith blue eyes, now soft and humid with human sympathy. Jnder his head on the pavement were silks and furs. With aggles's hat in his hand and with his face pinker than ever om a vehement outburst of oratory against reckless driving, tood the elderly gentleman who personified the city's wealth nd ripeness. From a near-by café hurried the by-product with ne vast jowl and baby complexion, bearing a glass full of rimson fluid that suggested delightful possibilities.

"Drink dis, sport," said the by-product, holding the glass o Raggles's lips.

Hundreds of people huddled around in a moment, their aces wearing the deepest concern. Two flattering and gor- eous policemen got into the circle and pressed back the over- lus of Samaritans. An old lady in a black shawl spoke loudly

of camphor; a newsboy slipped one of his papers beneath Raggles's elbow, where it lay on the muddy pavement. A brisk young man with a notebook was asking for names.

A bell clanged importantly, and the ambulance cleaned a lane through the crowd. A cool surgeon slipped into the midst of affairs.

"How do you feel, old man?" asked the surgeon, stooping easily to his task. The princess of silks and satins wiped a red drop or two from Raggles's brow with a fragrant cobweb.

"Me?" said Raggles, with a seraphic smile. "I feel fine."

He had found the heart of his new city.

In three days they let him leave his cot for the convalescent ward in the hospital. He had been in there an hour when the attendants heard sounds of conflict. Upon investigation they found that Raggles had assaulted and damaged a brother convalescent—a glowering transient whom a freight train collision had sent in to be patched up.

"What's all this about?" inquired the head nurse.

"He was runnin' down me town," said Raggles.

"What town?" asked the nurse.

"Noo York," said Raggles.

The Lost Blend

Since the bar has been blessed by the clergy, and cocktails open the dinners of the elect, one may speak of the saloon. Teetotalers need not listen, if they choose; there is always the slot restaurant, where a dime dropped into the cold bouillon aperture will bring forth a dry Martini.

Con Lantry worked on the sober side of the bar in Kenealy's café. You and I stood, one-legged like geese, on the

ther side and went into voluntary liquidation with our week's ages. Opposite danced Con, clean, temperate, clear-headed, olite, white-jacketed, punctual, trustworthy, young, responsi-le, and took our money.

The saloon (whether blessed or cursed) stood in one f those little "places" which are parallelograms instead of reets, and inhabited by laundries, decayed Knickerbocker milies and Bohemians who have nothing to do with either.

Over the café lived Kenealy and his family. His daughter atherine had eyes of dark Irish—but why should you be old? Be content with your Geraldine or your Eliza Ann. For on dreamed of her; and when she called softly at the foot f the back stairs for the pitcher of beer for dinner, his heart ent up and down like a milk punch in the shaker. Orderly nd fit are the rules of Romance; and if you hurl the last hilling of your fortune upon the bar for whiskey, the bar-ender shall take it, and marry his boss's daughter, and good ill grow out of it.

But not so Con. For in the presence of woman he was ongue-tied and scarlet. He who would quell with his eye the onorous youth whom the claret punch made loquacious, or mash with lemon squeezer the obstreperous, or hurl gutter-ard the cantankerous without a wrinkle coming to his white wn tie, when he stood before a woman he was voiceless, coherent, stuttering, buried beneath a hot avalanche of ashfulness and misery. What then was he before Katherine? trembler, with no word to say for himself, a stone without larney, the dumbest lover that ever babbled of the weather the presence of his divinity.

There came to Kenealy's two sunburned men, Riley and IcQuirk. They had conference with Kenealy; and then they ook possession of a back room which they filled with bottles nd siphons and jugs and druggist's measuring glasses. All the ppurtenances and liquids of a saloon were there, but they

dispensed no drinks. All day long the two sweltered in there, pouring and mixing unknown brews and decoctions from the liquors in their store. Riley had the education, and he figured on reams of paper, reducing gallons to ounces and quarts to fluid drams. McQuirk, a morose man with a red eye, dashed each unsuccessful completed mixture into the waste pipe with curses gentle, husky and deep. They labored heavily and untiringly to achieve some mysterious solution like two alchemists striving to resolve gold from the elements.

Into this back room one evening when his watch was done sauntered Con. His professional curiosity had been stirred by these occult bartenders at whose bar none drank, and who daily drew upon Kenealy's store of liquors to follow their consuming and fruitless experiments.

Down the back stairs came Katherine with her smile like sunrise on Gweebarra Bay.

"Good evening, Mr. Lantry," says she. "And what is the news to-day, if you please?"

"It looks like r-rain," stammered the shy one, backing to the wall.

"It couldn't do better," said Katherine. "I'm thinking there's nothing the worse off for a little water." In the back room Riley and McQuirk toiled like bearded witches over their strange compounds. From fifty bottles they drew liquids carefully measured after Riley's figures, and shook the whole together in a great glass vessel. Then McQuirk would dash it out, with gloomy profanity, and they would begin again.

"Sit down," said Riley to Con, "and I'll tell you.

"Last summer me and Tim concludes that an American bar in this nation of Nicaragua would pay. There was a town on the coast where there's nothing to eat but quinine and nothing to drink but rum. The natives and foreigners lay down with chills and get up with fevers; and a good mixed drink is nature's remedy for all such tropical inconveniences.

"So we lays in a fine stock of wet goods in New York, and ır fixtures and glassware, and we sails for that Santa Palma wn on a lime steamer. On the way me and Tim sees flying ;h and play seven-up with the captain and steward, and al- ady begins to feel like the high-ball kings of the tropics of apricorn.

"When we gets in five hours of the country that we was ›ing to introduce to long drinks and short change the cap- in calls us over to the starboard binnacle and recollects a w things.

"'I forgot to tell you, boys,' says he, 'that Nicaragua apped an import duty of 48 per cent. ad valorem on all bot- ed goods last month. The President took a bottle of Cincin- ıti hair tonic by mistake for tabasco sauce, and he's getting ren. Barrelled goods is free.'

"'Sorry you didn't mention it sooner,' says we. And we ›ught two forty-two gallon casks from the captain, and ›ened every bottle we had and dumped the stuff altogether the casks. That 48 per cent. would have ruined us; so we ok the chances on making that $1,200 cocktail rather than row the stuff away.

"Well, when we landed we tapped one of the barrels. The ixture was something heartrending. It was the color of a ate of Bowery pea soup, and it tasted like one of those coffee bstitutes your aunt makes you take for the heart trouble ›u get by picking losers. We gave a nigger four fingers of it try it, and he lay under a cocoanut tree three days beating e sand with his heels and refused to sign a testimonial.

"But the other barrel! Say, bartender, did you ever put on straw hat with a yellow band around it and go up in a bal- on with a pretty girl with $8,000,000 in your pocket all at e same time? That's what thirty drops of it would make ›u feel like. With two fingers of it inside you you would ıry your face in your hands and cry because there wasn't

anything more worth while around for you to lick than little Jim Jeffries. Yes, sir, that stuff in that second barrel was distilled elixir of battle, money and high life. It was the color of gold and as clear as glass, and it shone after dark like the sunshine was still in it. A thousand years from now you'll get a drink like that across the bar.

"Well, we started up business with that one line of drinks and it was enough. The piebald gentry of that country stuck to it like a hive of bees. If that barrel had lasted that country would have become the greatest on earth. When we opened up of mornings we had a line of generals and colonels and ex-presidents and revolutionists a block long waiting to be served. We started in at 50 cents silver a drink. The last ten gallons went easy at $5 a gulp. It was wonderful stuff. It gave a man courage and ambition and nerve to do anything; at the same time he didn't care whether his money was tainted or fresh from the Ice Trust. When that barrel was half gone Nicaragua had repudiated the National debt, removed the duty on cigarettes and was about to declare war on the United States and England.

"'Twas by accident we discovered this king of drinks, and 'twill be by good luck if we strike it again. For ten months we've been trying. Small lots at a time, we've mixed barrels of all the harmful ingredients known to the profession of drinking. Ye could have stocked ten bars with the whiskies, brandies, cordials, bitters, gins and wines me and Tim have wasted. A glorious drink like that to be denied the world! 'Tis a sorrow and a loss of money. The United States as a nation would welcome a drink of that sort, and pay for it."

All the while McQuirk had been carefully measuring and pouring together small quantities of various spirits, as Riley called them, from his latest pencilled prescription. The completed mixture was of a vile, mottled chocolate color. Mc

irk tasted it, and hurled it, with appropriate epithets, into e waste sink.

"'Tis a strange story, even if true," said Con. "I'll be going w along to my supper."

"Take a drink," said Riley. "We've all kinds except the lost nd."

"I never drink," said Con, "anything stronger than water. I just after meeting Miss Katherine by the stairs. She said rue word, 'There's not anything,' says she, 'but is better for a little water.'"

When Con had left them Riley almost felled McQuirk by low on the back.

"Did ye hear that?" he shouted. "Two fools are we. The dozen bottles of 'pollinaris we had on the ship—ye opened em yourself—which barrel did ye pour them in—which barye mudhead?"

"I mind," said McQuirk, slowly, "'twas in the second barrel opened. I mind the blue piece of paper pasted on the side it."

"We've got it now," cried Riley. "'Twas that we lacked. s the water that does the trick. Everything else we had ht. Hurry, man, and get two bottles of 'pollinaris from the , while I figure out the proportionments with me pencil."

An hour later Con strolled down the sidewalk toward nealy's café. Thus faithful employees haunt, during their reation hours, the vicinity where they labor, drawn by some sterious attraction.

A police patrol wagon stood at the side door. Three able os were half carrying, half hustling Riley and McQuirk up rear steps. The eyes and faces of each bore the bruises and s of sanguinary and assiduous conflict. Yet they whooped h strange joy, and directed upon the police the feeble remnts of their pugnacious madness.

"Began fighting each other in the back room," explained

Kenealy to Con. "And singing! That was worse. Smashed ev erything pretty much up. But they're good men. They'll pa for everything. Trying to invent some new kind of cocktai they was. I'll see they come out all right in the morning."

Con sauntered into the back room to view the battlefiel As he went through the hall Katherine was just coming dow the stairs.

"Good evening again, Mr. Lantry," said she. "And is ther no news from the weather yet?"

"Still threatens r-rain," said Con, slipping past with red i his smooth, pale cheek.

Riley and McQuirk had indeed waged a great and friendl battle. Broken bottles and glasses were everywhere. The roo was full of alcohol fumes; the floor was variegated with spi ituous puddles.

On the table stood a 32-ounce glass, graduated measur In the bottom of it were two tablespoonfuls of liquid— bright golden liquid that seemed to hold the sunshine a pri oner in its auriferous depths.

Con smelled it. He tasted it. He drank it.

As he returned through the hall Katherine was just goin up the stairs.

"No news yet, Mr. Lantry?" she asked with her teasin laugh.

Con lifted her clear from the floor and held her there.

"The news is," he said, "that we're to be married."

"Put me down, sir!" she cried indignantly, "or I will— Oh, Con, oh, wherever did you get the nerve to say it?"

A Harlem Tragedy

RLEM.

Mrs. Fink had dropped into Mrs. Cassidy's flat one flight ow.

'Ain't it a beaut?" said Mrs. Cassidy.

She turned her face proudly for her friend Mrs. Fink to see. e eye was nearly closed, with a great, greenish-purple ise around it. Her lip was cut and bleeding a little and re were red finger-marks on each side of her neck.

'My husband wouldn't ever think of doing that to me," l Mrs. Fink, concealing her envy.

I wouldn't have a man," declared Mrs. Cassidy, "that n't beat me up at least once a week. Shows he thinks some- ng of you. Say! but that last dose Jack gave me wasn't no neopathic one. I can see stars yet. But he'll be the sweetest n in town for the rest of the week to make up for it. This is good for theater tickets and a silk shirt waist at the very st."

I should hope," said Mrs. Fink, assuming complacency, at Mr. Fink is too much of a gentleman ever to raise his nd against me."

Oh, go on, Maggie!" said Mrs. Cassidy, laughing and ap- ing witch hazel, "you're only jealous Your old man is too ppéd and slow to ever give you a punch. He just sits down l practises physical culture with a newspaper when he nes home—now ain't that the truth?"

Mr. Fink certainly peruses of the papers when he comes ne," acknowledged Mrs. Fink, with a toss of her head; "but certainly don't ever make no Steve O'Donnell out of me to amuse himself—that's a sure thing."

Mrs. Cassidy laughed the contented laugh of the guard and happy matron. With the air of Cornelia exhibiting h jewels, she drew down the collar of her kimono and reveal another treasured bruise, maroon-colored, edged with oli and orange—a bruise now nearly well, but still to memo dear.

Mrs. Fink capitulated. The formal light in her eye soften to envious admiration. She and Mrs. Cassidy had been chu in the downtown paper-box factory before they had marrie one year before. Now she and her man occupied the fl above Mame and her man. Therefore she could not put airs with Mame.

"Don't it hurt when he soaks you?" asked Mrs. Fi curiously.

"Hurt!"—Mrs. Cassidy gave a soprano scream of delig "Well, say—did you ever have a brick house fall on you? well, that's just the way it feels—just like when they're diggi you out of the ruins. Jack's got a left that spells two matin and a new pair of Oxfords—and his right!—well, it takes trip to Coney and six pairs of open-work silk lisle threads make that good."

"But what does he beat you for?" inquired Mrs. Fink, wi wide-open eyes.

"Silly!" said Mrs. Cassidy, indulgently. "Why, because h full. It's generally on Saturday nights."

"But what cause do you give him?" persisted the seek after knowledge.

"Why, didn't I marry him? Jack comes in tanked up; a I'm here, ain't I? Who else has he got a right to beat? just like to catch him once beating anybody else! Sometim it's because supper ain't ready; and sometimes it's because is. Jack ain't particular about causes. He just lushes till remembers he's married, and then he makes for home a does me up. Saturday nights I just move the furniture w

p corners out of the way, so I won't cut my head when
ets his work in. He's got a left swing that jars you! Some-
s I take the count in the first round; but when I feel like
ing a good time during the week or want some new rags
me up again for more punishment. That's what I done
night. Jack knows I've been wanting a black silk waist for
onth, and I didn't think just one black eye would bring it.
you what, Mag, I'll bet you the ice cream he brings it
ight."

Mrs. Fink was thinking deeply.

"My Mart," she said, "never hit me a lick in his life. It's
like you said, Mame; he comes in grouchy and ain't got
rd to say. He never takes me out anywhere. He's a chair-
mer at home for fair. He buys me things, but he looks so
n about it that I never appreciate 'em."

Mrs. Cassidy slipped an arm around her chum.

"You poor thing!" she said. "But everybody can't have a
band like Jack. Marriage wouldn't be no failure if they was
ike him. These discontented wives you hear about—what
need is a man to come home and kick their slats in once
eek, and then make it up in kisses, and chocolate creams.
t'd give 'em some interest in life. What I want is a master-
man that slugs you when he's jagged and hugs you when
in't jagged. Preserve me from the man that ain't got the
l to do neither!"

Mrs. Fink sighed.

The hallways were suddenly filled with sound. The door
open at the kick of Mr. Cassidy. His arms were occupied
bundles. Mame flew and hung about his neck. Her
nd eye sparkled with the love light that shines in the eye
he Maori maid when she recovers consciousness in the
of the wooer who has stunned and dragged her there.

"Hello, old girl!" shouted Mr. Cassidy. He shed his bundles
lifted her off her feet in a mighty hug. "I got tickets for

Barnum & Bailey's, and if you'll bust the string of one of the bundles I guess you'll find that silk waist—why, good evening Mrs. Fink—I didn't see you at first. How's old Mart coming along?"

"He's very well, Mr. Cassidy—thanks," said Mrs. Fink. "must be going along up now. Mart'll be home for supper soon. I'll bring you down the pattern you wanted to-morrow Mame."

Mrs. Fink went up to her flat and had a little cry. It was meaningless cry, the kind of cry that only a woman knows about, a cry from no particular cause, altogether an absurd cry; the most transient and the most hopeless cry in the repertory of grief. Why had Martin never thrashed her? He was as big and strong as Jack Cassidy. Did he not care for her at all? He never quarrelled; he came home and lounged about silent, glum, idle. He was a fairly good provider, but he ignored the spices of life.

Mrs. Fink's ship of dreams was becalmed. Her captain ranged between plum duff and his hammock. If only he would shiver his timbers or stamp his foot on the quarter-deck now and then! And she had thought to sail so merrily, touching at ports in the Delectable Isles! But now, to vary the figure, she was ready to throw up the sponge, tired out, without a scratch to show for all those tame rounds with her sparring partner. For one moment she almost hated Mame—Mame, with her cuts and bruises, her salve of presents and kisses; her stormy voyage with her fighting, brutal, loving mate.

Mr. Fink came home at 7. He was permeated with the curse of domesticity. Beyond the portals of his cozy home he cared not to roam, to roam. He was the man who had caught the street car, the anaconda that had swallowed its prey, the tree that lay as it had fallen.

"Like the supper, Mart?" asked Mrs. Fink, who had striven over it.

M-m-m-yep," grunted Mr. Fink.

After supper he gathered his newspapers to read. He sat in stocking feet.

Arise, some new Dante, and sing me the befitting corner perdition for the man who sitteth in the house in his stocked feet. Sisters in Patience who by reason of ties or duty e endured it in silk, yarn cotton, lisle thread or woollen oes not the new canto belong?

The next day was Labor Day. The occupations of Mr. Cas- and Mr. Fink ceased for one passage of the sun. Labor, mphant, would parade and otherwise disport itself.

Mrs. Fink took Mrs. Cassidy's pattern down early. Mame on her new silk waist. Even her damaged eye managed emit a holiday gleam. Jack was fruitfully penitent, and re was a hilarious scheme for the day afoot, with parks and nics and Pilsener in it.

A rising, indignant jealousy seized Mrs. Fink as she reed to her flat above. Oh, happy Mame, with her bruises her quick-following balm! But was Mame to have a moopoly of happiness? Surely Martin Fink was as good a man ack Cassidy. Was his wife to go always unbelabored and aressed? A sudden, brilliant breathless idea came to Mrs. k. She would show Mame that there were husbands as e to use their fists and perhaps to be as tender afterward ny Jack.

The holiday promised to be a nominal one with the Finks. s. Fink had the stationary washtubs in the kitchen filled a two-weeks' wash that had been soaking overnight. Mr. k sat in his stockinged feet reading a newspaper. Thus La- Day presaged to speed.

Jealousy surged high in Mrs. Fink's heart and higher still ged an audacious resolve. If her man would not strike her he would not so far prove his manhood, his prerogative

and his interest in conjugal affairs, he must be prompted t
do his duty.

Mr. Fink lit his pipe and peacefully rubbed an ankle wit
a stockinged toe. He reposed in the state of matrimony lik
a lump of unblended suet in a pudding. This was his lev
Elysium—to sit at ease vicariously girdling the world in prin
amid the wifely splashing of suds and the agreeable smells o
breakfast dishes departed and dinner ones to come. Man
ideas were far from his mind; but the furthest one was th
thought of beating his wife.

Mrs. Fink turned on the hot water and set the washboard
in the suds. Up from the flat below came the gay laugh o
Mrs. Cassidy. It sounded like a taunt, a flaunting of her ow
happiness in the face of the unslugged bride above. Now wa
Mrs. Fink's time.

Suddenly she turned like a fury upon the man reading.

"You lazy loafer!" she cried, "must I work my arms o
washing and toiling for the ugly likes of you? Are you a ma
or are you a kitchen hound?"

Mr. Fink dropped his paper, motionless from surprise. Sh
feared that he would not strike—that the provocation ha
been insufficient. She leaped at him and struck him fierce
in the face with her clenched hand. In that instant she fe
a thrill of love for him such as she had not felt for many
day. Rise up, Martin Fink, and come into your kingdom! Ol
she must feel the weight of his hand now—just to show tha
he cared—just to show that he cared!

Mr. Fink sprang to his feet—Maggie caught him again o
the jaw with a wide swing of her other hand. She closed h
eyes in that fearful, blissful moment before his blow shoul
come—she whispered his name to herself—she leaned to th
expected shock, hungry for it.

In the flat below Mr. Cassidy, with a shamed and contri
face, was powdering Mame's eye in preparation for the

ket. From the flat above came the sound of a woman's
e, high-raised, a bumping, a stumbling and a shuffling, a
ir overturned—unmistakable sounds of domestic conflict.
Mart and Mag scrapping?" postulated Mr. Cassidy.
dn't know they ever indulged. Shall I trot up and see if
y need a sponge holder?"

)ne of Mrs. Cassidy's eyes sparkled like a diamond. The
er twinkled at least like paste.

Oh, oh," she said, softly and without apparent meaning in
feminine ejaculatory manner. "I wonder if—wonder if!
it, Jack, till I go up and see."

Jp the stairs she sped. As her foot struck the hallway above
from the kitchen door of her flat wildly flounced Mrs.
k.

Oh, Maggie," cried Mrs. Cassidy, in a delighted whisper;
l he? Oh, did he?"

Mrs. Fink ran and laid her face upon her chum's shoulder
sobbed hopelessly.

Mrs. Cassidy took Maggie's face between her hands and
ed it gently. Tear-stained it was, flushing and paling, but
velvety, pink-and-white, becomingly freckled surface was
cratched, unbruised, unmarred by the recreant fist of Mr.
k.

Tell me, Maggie," pleaded Mame, "or I'll go in there and
out. What was it? Did he hurt you—what did he do?"

Mrs. Fink's face went down again despairingly on the
om of her friend.

For God's sake don't open that door, Mame," she sobbed.
d don't ever tell nobody—keep it under your hat. He—he
er touched me, and—he's—oh, Gawd—he's washin' the
hes—he's washin' the clothes!"

A Midsummer Knight's Dream

"The knights are dead;
Their swords are rust.
Except a few who have to hust-
Le all the time
To raise the dust."

DEAR READER: It was summertime. The sun glared down upo the city with pitiless ferocity. It is difficult for the sun to b ferocious and exhibit compunction simultaneously. The hea was—oh, bother thermometers!—who cares for standar measures, anyhow? It was so hot that——

The roof gardens put on so many extra waiters that yo could hope to get your gin fizz now—as soon as all the oth people got theirs. The hospitals were putting in extra cots fo bystanders. For when little woolly dogs loll their tongues ou and say "woof, woof!" at the fleas that bite 'em, and nervou old black bombazine ladies screech "Mad dog!" and polic men begin to shoot, somebody is going to get hurt. The ma from Pompton, N. J., who always wears an overcoat in Jul had turned up in a Broadway hotel drinking hot Scotches an enjoying his annual ray from the calcium. Philanthropis were petitioning the Legislature to pass a bill requiring buil ers to make tenement fire-escapes more commodious, so th families might die all together of the heat instead of one two at a time. So many men were telling you about the nu ber of baths they took each day that you wondered how th got along after the real lessee of the apartment came back town and thanked 'em for taking such good care of it. Th young man who called loudly for cold beef and beer in th restaurant, protesting that roast pullet and Burgundy w

y too heavy for such weather, blushed when he met your for you had heard him all winter calling, in modest tones, the same ascetic viands. Soup, pocketbooks, shirt waists, rs, and baseball excuses grew thinner. Yes, it was summer-e.

man stood at Thirty-fourth Street waiting for a down-n car. A man of forty, gray-haired, pink-faced, keen, nerv- plainly dressed, with a harassed look around the eyes. wiped his forehead and laughed loudly when a fat man n an outing look stopped and spoke with him.

No, siree," he shouted with defiance and scorn. "None of old mosquito-haunted swamps and skyscraper moun-s without elevators for me. When I want to get away from weather I know how to do it. New York, sir, is the finest mer resort in the country. Keep in the shade and watch diet, and don't get too far away from an electric fan. Talk ut your Adirondacks and your Catskills! There's more l comfort in the borough of Manhattan than in all the of the country together. No, siree! No tramping up per-dicular cliffs and being waked up at 4 in the morning by llion flies, and eating canned goods straight from the city ne. Little old New York will take a few select summer ders; comforts and conveniences of home—that's the ad. I answer every time."

You need a vacation," said the fat man, looking closely he other. "You haven't been away from town in years. er come with me for two weeks, anyhow. The trout in Beaverkill are jumping at anything now that looks like a Harding writes me that he landed a three-pound brown week."

Nonsense!" cried the other man. "Go ahead, if you like, boggle around in rubber boots wearing yourself out try-o catch fish. When I want one I go to a cool restaurant order it. I laugh at you fellows whenever I think of you

hustling around in the heat in the country thinking you a
having a good time. For me Father Knickerbocker's little i
proved farm with the big shady lane running through the m
dle of it."

The fat man sighed over his friend and went his way. T
man who thought New York was the greatest summer res
in the country boarded a car and went buzzing down to
office. On the way he threw away his newspaper and look
up at a ragged patch of sky above the housetops.

"Three pounds!" he muttered, absently. "And Hardi
isn't a liar. I believe, if I could—but it's impossible—they
got to have another month—another month at least."

In his office the upholder of urban midsummer joys div
head foremost, into the swimming pool of business. Adki
his clerk, came and added a spray of letters, memoranda a
telegrams.

At 5 o'clock in the afternoon the busy man leaned back
his office chair, put his feet on the desk and mused alou

"I wonder what kind of bait Harding used."

. . . . . .

She was all in white that day; and thereby Compton l
a bet to Gaines. Compton had wagered she would wear lig
blue, for she knew that was his favorite color, and Compt
was a millionaire's son, and that almost laid him open to
charge of betting on a sure thing. But white was her choi
and Gaines held up his head with twenty-five's lordly air.

The little summer hotel in the mountains had a liv
crowd that year. There were two or three young college m
and a couple of artists and a young naval officer on one si
On the other there were enough beauties among the you
ladies for the correspondent of a society paper to refer to th
as a "bevy." But the moon among the stars was Mary Sew
Each one of the young men greatly desired to arrange m
ters so that he could pay her millinery bills, and fix the f

e, and have her do away with the "Sewell" part of her
e forever. Those who could stay only a week or two went
y hinting at pistols and blighted hearts. But Compton
ed like the mountains themselves, for he could afford it.
Gaines stayed because he was a fighter and wasn't afraid
illionaires' sons, and—well, he adored the country.
What do you think, Miss Mary?" he said once. "I knew
ffer in New York who claimed to like it in the summer-
. Said you could keep cooler there than you could in the
ds. Wasn't he an awful silly? I don't think I could breathe
Broadway after the 1st of June."
Mamma was thinking of going back week after next," said
s Mary with a lovely frown.
But when you think of it," said Gaines, "there are lots of
places in town in the summer. The roof gardens, you
w, and the—er—the roof gardens."
eepest blue was the lake that day—the day when they had
mock tournament, and the men rode clumsy farm horses
nd in a glade in the woods and caught curtain rings on
end of a lance. Such fun!
ool and dry as the finest wine came the breath of the
owed forest. The valley below was a vision seen through
pal haze. A white mist from hidden falls blurred the green
hand's breadth of tree tops halfway down the gorge.
th made merry hand-in-hand with young summer. Noth-
on Broadway like that.
he villagers gathered to see the city folks pursue their mad
ery. The woods rang with the laughter of pixies and nai-
nd sprites. Gaines caught most of the rings. His was the
lege to crown the queen of the tournament. He was the
ucring knight—as far as the rings went. On his arm he
a white scarf. Compton wore light blue. She had de-
d her preference for blue, but she wore white that day.
aines looked about for the queen to crown her. He heard

her merry laugh, as if from the clouds. She had slipped awa and climbed Chimney Rock, a little granite bluff, and stoo there, a white fairy among the laurels, fifty feet above thei heads.

Instantly he and Compton accepted the implied challenge The bluff was easily mounted at the rear, but the front offere small hold to hand or foot. Each man quickly selected hi route and began to climb. A crevice, a bush, a slight projec tion, a vine or tree branch—all of these were aids that counte in the race. It was all foolery—there was no stake; but ther was youth in it, cross reader, and light hearts, and somethin else that Miss Clay writes so charmingly about.

Gaines gave a great tug at the root of a laurel and pulle himself to Miss Mary's feet. On his arm he carried th wreath of roses; and while the villagers and summer boar ers screamed and applauded below he placed it on the queen brow.

"You are a gallant knight," said Miss Mary.

"If I could be your true knight always," began Gaines, bu Miss Mary laughed him dumb, for Compton scrambled ov the edge of the rock one minute behind time.

What a twilight that was when they drove back to the hote The opal of the valley turned slowly to purple, the dark woo framed the lake as a mirror, the tonic air stirred the very so in one. The first pale stars came out over the mountain to where yet a faint glow of——

. . . . . .

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Gaines," said Adkins.

The man who believed New York to be the finest summ resort in the world opened his eyes and kicked over the muc lage bottle on his desk.

"I—I believe I was asleep," he said.

"It's the heat," said Adkins. "It's something awful in th city these——"

"Nonsense!" said the other. "The city beats the country ten
one in summer. Fools go out tramping in muddy brooks
d wear themselves out trying to catch little fish as long
your finger. Stay in town and keep comfortable—that's my
ea."

"Some letters just came," said Adkins. "I thought you
ight like to glance at them before you go."

Let us look over his shoulder and read just a few lines of
ie of them:

My dear, dear Husband: Just received your letter ordering
to stay another month. . . . Rita's cough is almost gone. . . .
hnny has simply gone wild like a little Indian. . . . Will be
e making of both children . . . work so hard, and I know that
ur business can hardly afford to keep us here so long . . . best
in that ever . . . you always pretend that you like the city in
mmer . . . trout fishing that you used to be so fond of . . .
d all to keep us well and happy . . . come to you if it were
t doing the babies so much good. . . . I stood last evening
Chimney Rock in exactly the same spot where I was when
u put the wreath of roses on my head . . . through all the
rld . . . when you said you would be my true knight . . .
teen years ago, dear, just think! . . . have always been that to
e . . . ever and ever,

Mary.

The man who said he thought New York the finest sum-
er resort in the country dropped into a café on his way home
d had a glass of beer under an electric fan.

"Wonder what kind of a fly old Harding used," he said to
nself.

The Last Leaf

In a little district west of Washington Square the street have run crazy and broken themselves into small strips called "places." These "places" make strange angles and curves. One street crosses itself a time or two. An artist once discovered a valuable possibility in this street. Suppose a collector with a bill for paints, paper and canvas should, in traversing this route, suddenly meet himself coming back, without a cent having been paid on account!

So, to quaint old Greenwich Village the art people soon came prowling, hunting for north windows and eighteenth century gables and Dutch attics and low rents. Then they imported some pewter mugs and a chafing dish or two from Sixth Avenue, and became a "colony."

At the top of a squatty, three-story brick Sue and Johnsy had their studio. "Johnsy" was familiar for Joanna. One was from Maine; the other from California. They had met at the *table d'hôte* of an Eighth Street "Delmonico's," and found their tastes in art, chicory salad and bishop sleeves so congenial that the joint studio resulted.

That was in May. In November a cold, unseen stranger whom the doctors called Pneumonia, stalked about the colony, touching one here and there with his icy fingers. Over on the east side this ravager strode boldly, smiting his victims by scores, but his feet trod slowly through the maze of the narrow and moss-grown "places."

Mr. Pneumonia was not what you would call a chivalric old gentleman. A mite of a little woman with blood thinned by California zephyrs was hardly fair game for the red-fisted, short-breathed old duffer. But Johnsy he smote; and she

ay, scarcely moving, on her painted iron bedstead, looking hrough the small Dutch window-panes at the blank side of he next brick house.

One morning the busy doctor invited Sue into the hallway vith a shaggy, gray eyebrow.

"She has one chance in—let us say, ten," he said, as he hook down the mercury in his clinical thermometer. "And hat chance is for her to want to live. This way people have f lining-up on the side of the undertaker makes the entire harmacopœia look silly. Your little lady has made up her nind that she's not going to get well. Has she anything on ier mind?"

"She—she wanted to paint the Bay of Naples some day," aid Sue.

"Paint?—bosh! Has she anything on her mind worth think-ng about twice—a man for instance?"

"A man?" said Sue, with a jew's-harp twang in her voice. "Is man worth—but, no, doctor; there is nothing of the kind."

"Well, it is the weakness, then," said the doctor. "I will do ll that science, so far as it may filter through my efforts, can ccomplish. But whenever my patient begins to count the car-iages in her funeral procession I subtract 50 per cent. from he curative power of medicines. If you will get her to ask one uestion about the new winter styles in cloak sleeves I will romise you a one-in-five chance for her, instead of one in en."

After the doctor had gone Sue went into the workroom and ried a Japanese napkin to a pulp. Then she swaggered into ohnsy's room with her drawing board, whistling ragtime.

Johnsy lay, scarcely making a ripple under the bedclothes, vith her face toward the window. Sue stopped whistling, hinking she was asleep.

She arranged her board and began a pen-and-ink drawing o illustrate a magazine story. Young artists must pave their

way to Art by drawing pictures for magazine stories that young authors write to pave their way to Literature.

As Sue was sketching a pair of elegant horseshow riding trousers and a monocle on the figure of the hero, an Idaho cowboy, she heard a low sound, several times repeated. She went quickly to the bedside.

Johnsy's eyes were open wide. She was looking out the window and counting—counting backward.

"Twelve," she said, and a little later "eleven"; and then "ten," and "nine"; and then "eight" and "seven," almost together.

Sue looked solicitously out of the window. What was there to count? There was only a bare, dreary yard to be seen, and the blank side of the brick house twenty feet away. An old, old ivy vine, gnarled and decayed at the roots, climbed half way up the brick wall. The cold breath of autumn had stricken its leaves from the vine until its skeleton branches clung, almost bare, to the crumbling bricks.

"What is it, dear?" asked Sue.

"Six," said Johnsy, in almost a whisper. "They're falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It made my head ache to count them. But now it's easy. There goes another one. There are only five left now."

"Five what, dear? Tell your Sudie."

"Leaves. On the ivy vine. When the last one falls I must go, too. I've known that for three days. Didn't the doctor tell you?"

"Oh, I never heard of such nonsense," complained Sue, with magnificent scorn. "What have old ivy leaves to do with your getting well? And you used to love that vine so, you naughty girl. Don't be a goosey. Why, the doctor told me this morning that your chances for getting well real soon were—let's see exactly what he said—he said the chances were ten to one! Why, that's almost as good a chance as we have in

New York when we ride on the street cars or walk past a new building. Try to take some broth now, and let Sudie go back to her drawing, so she can sell the editor man with it, and buy port wine for her sick child, and pork chops for her greedy self."

"You needn't get any more wine," said Johnsy, keeping her eyes fixed out the window. "There goes another. No, I don't want any broth. That leaves just four. I want to see the last one fall before it gets dark. Then I'll go, too."

"Johnsy, dear," said Sue, bending over her, "will you promise me to keep your eyes closed, and not look out the window until I am done working? I must hand those drawings in by to-morrow. I need the light, or I would draw the shade down."

"Couldn't you draw in the other room?" asked Johnsy, coldly.

"I'd rather be here by you," said Sue. "Besides, I don't want you to keep looking at those silly ivy leaves."

"Tell me as soon as you have finished," said Johnsy, closing her eyes, and lying white and still as a fallen statue, "because I want to see the last one fall. I'm tired of waiting. I'm tired of thinking. I want to turn loose my hold on everything, and go sailing down, down, just like one of those poor, tired leaves."

"Try to sleep," said Sue. "I must call Behrman up to be my model for the old hermit miner. I'll not be gone a minute. Don't try to move 'til I come back."

Old Behrman was a painter who lived on the ground floor beneath them. He was past sixty and had a Michael Angelo's Moses beard curling down from the head of a satyr along the body of an imp. Behrman was a failure in art. Forty years he had wielded the brush without getting near enough to touch the hem of his Mistress's robe. He had been always about to paint a masterpiece, but had never yet begun it. For several years he had painted nothing except now and then a daub

in the line of commerce or advertising. He earned a little by serving as a model to those young artists in the colony who could not pay the price of a professional. He drank gin to excess, and still talked of his coming masterpiece. For the rest he was a fierce little old man, who scoffed terribly at softness in any one, and who regarded himself as especial mastiff-in-waiting to protect the two young artists in the studio above.

Sue found Behrman smelling strongly of juniper berries in his dimly lighted den below. In one corner was a blank canvas on an easel that had been waiting there for twenty-five years to receive the first line of the masterpiece. She told him of Johnsy's fancy, and how she feared she would, indeed, light and fragile as a leaf herself, float away, when her slight hold upon the world grew weaker.

Old Behrman, with his red eyes plainly streaming, shouted his contempt and derision for such idiotic imaginings.

"Vass!" he cried. "Is dere people in de world mit der foolishness to die because leafs dey drop off from a confounded vine? I haf not heard of such a thing. No, I will not bose as a model for your fool hermit-dunderhead. Vy do you allow dot silly pusiness to come in der brain of her? Ach, dot poor leetle Miss Yohnsy."

"She is very ill and weak," said Sue, "and the fever has left her mind morbid and full of strange fancies. Very well, Mr. Behrman, if you do not care to pose for me, you needn't. But I think you are a horrid old—old flibbertigibbet."

"You are just like a woman!" yelled Behrman. "Who said I will not bose? Go on. I come mit you. For half an hour I haf peen trying to say dot I am ready to bose. Gott! dis is not any blace in which one so goot as Miss Yohnsy shall lie sick. Some day I vill baint a masterpiece, and ve shall all go away. Gott! yes."

Johnsy was sleeping when they went upstairs. Sue pulled the shade down to the window-sill, and motioned Behrman

nto the other room. In there they peered out the window fearfully at the ivy vine. Then they looked at each other for a moment without speaking. A persistent, cold rain was falling, mingled with snow. Behrman, in his old blue shirt, took his seat as the hermit miner on an upturned kettle for a rock.

When Sue awoke from an hour's sleep the next morning she found Johnsy with dull, wide-open eyes staring at the drawn green shade.

"Pull it up; I want to see," she ordered, in a whisper.

Wearily Sue obeyed.

But, lo! after the beating rain and fierce gusts of wind that had endured through the livelong night, there yet stood out against the brick wall one ivy leaf. It was the last on the vine. Still dark green near its stem, but with its serrated edges tinted with the yellow of dissolution and decay, it hung bravely from a branch some twenty feet above the ground.

"It is the last one," said Johnsy. "I thought it would surely fall during the night. I heard the wind. It will fall to-day, and I shall die at the same time."

"Dear, dear!" said Sue, leaning her worn face down to the pillow, "think of me, if you won't think of yourself. What would I do?"

But Johnsy did not answer. The lonesomest thing in all the world is a soul when it is making ready to go on its mysterious, far journey. The fancy seemed to possess her more strongly as one by one the ties that bound her to friendship and to earth were loosed.

The day wore away, and even through the twilight they could see the lone ivy leaf clinging to its stem against the wall. And then, with the coming of the night the north wind was again loosed, while the rain still beat against the windows and pattered down from the low Dutch eaves.

When it was light enough Johnsy, the merciless, commanded that the shade be raised.

The ivy leaf was still there.

Johnsy lay for a long time looking at it. And then she called to Sue, who was stirring her chicken broth over the gas stove.

"I've been a bad girl, Sudie," said Johnsy. "Something has made that last leaf stay there to show me how wicked I was. It is a sin to want to die. You may bring me a little broth now, and some milk with a little port in it, and—no; bring me a hand-mirror first, and then pack some pillows about me, and I will sit up and watch you cook."

An hour later she said:

"Sudie, some day I hope to paint the Bay of Naples."

The doctor came in the afternoon, and Sue had an excuse to go into the hallway as he left.

"Even chances," said the doctor, taking Sue's thin, shaking hand in his. "With good nursing you'll win. And now I must see another case I have downstairs. Behrman, his name is—some kind of an artist, I believe. Pneumonia, too. He is an old, weak man, and the attack is acute. There is no hope for him; but he goes to the hospital to-day to be made more comfortable."

The next day the doctor said to Sue: "She's out of danger. You've won. Nutrition and care now—that's all."

And that afternoon Sue came to the bed where Johnsy lay, contentedly knitting a very blue and very useless woollen shoulder scarf, and put one arm around her, pillows and all.

"I have something to tell you, white mouse," she said. "Mr. Behrman died of pneumonia to-day in the hospital. He was ill only two days. The janitor found him on the morning of the first day in his room downstairs helpless with pain. His shoes and clothing were wet through and icy cold. They couldn't imagine where he had been on such a dreadful night. And then they found a lantern, still lighted, and a ladder that had been dragged from its place, and some scattered brushes, and a palette with green and yellow colors mixed on it, and

–look out the window, dear, at the last ivy leaf on the wall. Didn't you wonder why it never fluttered or moved when he wind blew? Ah, darling, it's Behrman's masterpiece—he ainted it there the night that the last leaf fell."

The Count and the Wedding Guest

ONE EVENING when Andy Donovan went to dinner at his Second Avenue boarding-house, Mrs. Scott introduced him to a ew boarder, a young lady, Miss Conway. Miss Conway was mall and unobtrusive. She wore a plain, snuffy-brown dress, nd bestowed her interest, which seemed languid, upon her late. She lifted her diffident eyelids and shot one perspicuus, judicial glance at Mr. Donovan, politely murmured his ame, and returned to her mutton. Mr. Donovan bowed with he grace and beaming smile that were rapidly winning for im social, business and political advancement, and erased he snuffy-brown one from the tablets of his consideration.

Two weeks later Andy was sitting on the front steps enjoyng his cigar. There was a soft rustle behind and above him nd Andy turned his head—and had his head turned.

Just coming out of the door was Miss Conway. She wore night-black dress of *crêpe de—crêpe de*—oh, this thin black oods. Her hat was black, and from it drooped and fluttered n ebon veil, filmy as a spider's web. She stood on the top tep and drew on black silk gloves. Not a speck of white or spot of color about her dress anywhere. Her rich golden hair as drawn, with scarcely a ripple, into a shining, smooth knot ow on her neck. Her face was plain rather than pretty, but was now illuminated and made almost beautiful by her rge gray eyes that gazed above the houses across the street

into the sky with an expression of the most appealing sadness and melancholy.

Gather the idea, girls—all black, you know, with the preference for *crêpe de*—oh, *crêpe de Chine*—that's it. All black, and that sad, faraway look, and the hair shining under the black veil (you have to be a blonde, of course), and try to look as if, although your young life had been blighted just as it was about to give a hop-skip-and-a-jump over the threshold of life, a walk in the park might do you good, and be sure to happen out the door at the right moment, and—oh, it'll fetch 'em every time. But it's fierce, now, how cynical I am, ain't it?—to talk about mourning costumes this way.

Mr. Donovan suddenly reinscribed Miss Conway upon the tablets of his consideration. He threw away the remaining inch and a quarter of his cigar, that would have been good for eight minutes yet, and quickly shifted his center of gravity to his low-cut patent leathers.

"It's a fine, clear evening, Miss Conway," he said; and if the Weather Bureau could have heard the confident emphasis of his tones it would have hoisted the square white signal, and nailed it to the mast.

"To them that has the heart to enjoy it, it is, Mr. Donovan," said Miss Conway, with a sigh.

Mr. Donovan, in his heart, cursed fair weather. Heartless weather! It should hail and blow and snow to be consonant with the mood of Miss Conway.

"I hope none of your relatives—I hope you haven't sustained a loss?" ventured Mr. Donovan.

"Death has claimed," said Miss Conway, hesitating—"not a relative, but one who—but I will not intrude my grief upon you, Mr. Donovan."

"Intrude?" protested Mr. Donovan. "Why, say, Miss Conway, I'd be delighted, that is, I'd be sorry—I mean I'm sure nobody could sympathize with you truer than I would."

Miss Conway smiled a little smile. And oh, it was sadder
nan her expression in repose.

"'Laugh, and the world laughs with you; weep, and they
ive you the laugh,'" she quoted. "I have learned that, Mr.
Donovan. I have no friends or acquaintances in this city. But
ou have been kind to me. I appreciate it highly."

He had passed her the pepper twice at the table.

"It's tough to be alone in New York—that's a cinch," said
Ir. Donovan. "But, say—whenever this little old town does
osen up and get friendly it goes the limit. Say you took a
ttle stroll in the park, Miss Conway—don't you think it
ight chase away some of your mullygrubs? And if you'd al-
w me——"

"Thanks, Mr. Donovan. I'd be pleased to accept of your
scort if you think the company of one whose heart is filled
ith gloom could be anyways agreeable to you."

Through the open gates of the iron-railed, old, downtown
ark, where the elect once took the air, they strolled, and
ound a quiet bench.

There is this difference between the grief of youth and that
f old age; youth's burden is lightened by as much of it as
nother shares; old age may give and give, but the sorrow re-
ains the same.

"He was my fiancé," confided Miss Conway, at the end of
n hour. "We were going to be married next spring. I don't
ant you to think that I am stringing you, Mr. Donovan, but
e was a real Count. He had an estate and a castle in Italy.
Count Fernando Mazzini was his name. I never saw the beat
f him for elegance. Papa objected, of course, and once we
oped, but Papa overtook us, and took us back. I thought
ire Papa and Fernando would fight a duel. Papa has a livery
usiness—in P'kipsee, you know.

"Finally, Papa came 'round, all right, and said we might be
arried next spring. Fernando showed him proofs of his title

and wealth, and then went over to Italy to get the castle fixed up for us. Papa's very proud and, when Fernando wanted to give me several thousand dollars for my trousseau he called him down something awful. He wouldn't even let me take a ring or any presents from him. And when Fernando sailed I came to the city and got a position as cashier in a candy store.

"Three days ago I got a letter from Italy, forwarded from P'kipsee, saying that Fernando had been killed in a gondola accident.

"That is why I am in mourning. My heart, Mr. Donovan, will remain forever in his grave. I guess I am poor company, Mr. Donovan, but I cannot take any interest in no one. I should not care to keep you from gayety and your friends who can smile and entertain you. Perhaps you would prefer to walk back to the house?"

Now, girls, if you want to observe a young man hustle out after a pick and shovel, just tell him that your heart is in some other fellow's grave. Young men are grave-robbers by nature. Ask any widow. Something must be done to restore that missing organ to weeping angels in *crêpe de Chine*. Dead men certainly get the worst of it from all sides.

"I'm awful sorry," said Mr. Donovan, gently. "No, we won't walk back to the house just yet. And don't say you haven't no friends in this city, Miss Conway. I'm awful sorry, and I want you to believe I'm your friend, and that I'm awful sorry."

"I've got his picture here in my locket," said Miss Conway, after wiping her eyes with her handkerchief. "I never showed it to anybody; but I will to you, Mr. Donovan, because I believe you to be a true friend."

Mr. Donovan gazed long and with much interest at the photograph in the locket that Miss Conway opened for him. The face of Count Mazzini was one to command interest. It was a smooth, intelligent, bright, almost a handsome face—

the face of a strong, cheerful man who might well be a leader among his fellows.

"I have a larger one, framed, in my room," said Miss Conway. "When we return I will show you that. They are all I have to remind me of Fernando. But he ever will be present in my heart, that's a sure thing."

A subtle task confronted Mr. Donovan—that of supplanting the unfortunate Count in the heart of Miss Conway. This his admiration for her determined him to do. But the magnitude of the undertaking did not seem to weigh upon his spirits. The sympathetic but cheerful friend was the rôle he essayed; and he played it so successfully that the next half-hour found them conversing pensively across two plates of ice-cream, though yet there was no diminution of the sadness in Miss Conway's large gray eyes.

Before they parted in the hall that evening she ran upstairs and brought down the framed photograph wrapped lovingly in a white silk scarf. Mr. Donovan surveyed it with inscrutable eyes.

"He gave me this the night he left for Italy," said Miss Conway. "I had the one for the locket made from this."

"A fine-looking man," said Mr. Donovan, heartily. "How would it suit you, Miss Conway, to give me the pleasure of your company to Coney next Sunday afternoon?"

A month later they announced their engagement to Mrs. Scott and the other boarders. Miss Conway continued to wear black.

A week after the announcement the two sat on the same bench in the downtown park, while the fluttering leaves of the trees made a dim kinetoscopic picture of them in the moonlight. But Donovan had worn a look of abstracted gloom all day. He was so silent to-night that love's lips could not keep back any longer the question that love's heart propounded.

"What's the matter, Andy, you are so solemn and grouchy to-night?"

"Nothing, Maggie."

"I know better. Can't I tell? You never acted this way before. What is it?"

"It's nothing much, Maggie."

"Yes it is; and I want to know. I'll bet it's some other girl you are thinking about. All right. Why don't you go get her if you want her? Take your arm away, if you please."

"I'll tell you then," said Andy, wisely, "but I guess you won't understand it exactly. You've heard of Mike Sullivan, haven't you? 'Big Mike' Sullivan, everybody calls him."

"No, I haven't," said Maggie. "And I don't want to, if he makes you act like this. Who is he?"

"He's the biggest man in New York," said Andy, almost reverently. "He can about do anything he wants to with Tammany or any other old thing in the political line. He's a mile high and as broad as East River. You say anything against Big Mike, and you'll have a million men on your collarbone in about two seconds. Why, he made a visit over to the old country awhile back, and the kings took to their holes like rabbits.

"Well, Big Mike's a friend of mine. I ain't more than deuce-high in the district as far as influence goes, but Mike's as good a friend to a little man, or a poor man as he is to a big one. I met him to-day on the Bowery, and what do you think he does? Comes up and shakes hands. 'Andy,' says he, 'I've been keeping cases on you. You've been putting in some good licks over on your side of the street, and I'm proud of you. What'll you take to drink?' He takes a cigar and I take a highball. I told him I was going to get married in two weeks. 'Andy,' says he, 'send me an invitation, so I'll keep in mind of it, and I'll come to the wedding.' That's what Big Mike says to me; and he always does what he says.

"You don't understand it, Maggie, but I'd have one of my hands cut off to have Big Mike Sullivan at our wedding. It would be the proudest day of my life. When he goes to a man's wedding, there's a guy being married that's made for life. Now, that's why I'm maybe looking sore to-night."

"Why don't you invite him, then, if he's so much to the mustard?" said Maggie, lightly.

"There's a reason why I can't," said Andy, sadly. "There's a reason why he mustn't be there. Don't ask me what it is, for I can't tell you."

"Oh, I don't care," said Maggie. "It's something about politics, of course. But it's no reason why you can't smile at me."

"Maggie," said Andy, presently, "do you think as much of me as you did of your—as you did of the Count Mazzini?"

He waited a long time, but Maggie did not reply. And then, suddenly she leaned against his shoulder and began to cry—to cry and shake with sobs, holding his arm tightly, and wetting the *crêpe de Chine* with tears.

"There, there, there!" soothed Andy, putting aside his own trouble. "And what is it, now?"

"Andy," sobbed Maggie, "I've lied to you, and you'll never marry me, or love me any more. But I feel that I've got to tell. Andy, there never was so much as the little finger of a count. I never had a beau in my life. But all the other girls had; and they talked about 'em; and that seemed to make the fellows like 'em more. And, Andy, I look swell in black—you know I do. So I went out to a photograph store and bought that picture, and had a little one made for my locket, and made up all that story about the Count and about his being killed, so I could wear black. And nobody can love a liar, and you'll shake me, Andy, and I'll die for shame. Oh, there never was anybody I liked but you—and that's all."

But instead of being pushed away, she found Andy's arm

folding her closer. She looked up and saw his face cleared and smiling.

"Could you—could you forgive me, Andy?"

"Sure," said Andy. "It's all right about that. Back to the cemetery for the Count. You've straightened everything out, Maggie. I was in hopes you would before the wedding-day. Bully girl!"

"Andy," said Maggie, with a somewhat shy smile, after she had been thoroughly assured of forgiveness, "did you believe all that story about the Count?"

"Well, not to any large extent," said Andy, reaching for his cigar case; "because it's Big Mike Sullivan's picture you've got in that locket of yours."

A Municipal Report

The cities are full of pride,
Challenging each to each—
This from her mountainside,
That from her burthened beach.
R. KIPLING.

Fancy a novel about Chicago or Buffalo, let us say, of Nashville, Tennessee! There are just three big cities in the United States that are "story cities"—New York, of course, New Orleans, and, best of the lot, San Francisco.—FRANK NORRIS.

EAST is East, and West is San Francisco, according to Californians. Californians are a race of people; they are not merely inhabitants of a State. They are the Southerners of the West. Now, Chicagoans are no less loyal to their city; but when you ask them why, they stammer and speak of lake fish and the new Odd Fellows Building. But Californians go into detail.

Of course they have, in the climate, an argument that is ood for half an hour while you are thinking of your coal ills and heavy underwear. But as soon as they come to mis-ake your silence for conviction, madness comes upon them, nd they picture the city of the Golden Gate as the Bagdad f the New World. So far, as a matter of opinion, no refuta-ion is necessary. But dear cousins all (from Adam and Eve escended), it is a rash one who will lay his finger on the nap and say: "In this town there can be no romance—what ould happen here?" Yes, it is a bold and a rash deed to chal-enge in one sentence, history, romance, and Rand and Mc-Nally.

NASHVILLE.—A city, port of delivery, and the capital of the tate of Tennessee, is on the Cumberland River and on the N. C. & St. L. and the L. & N. railroads. This city is regarded s the most important educational centre in the South.

I stepped off the train at 8 P.M. Having searched the thesau-us in vain for adjectives, I must, as a substitution, hie me to omparison in the form of a recipe.

Take of London fog 30 parts; malaria 10 parts; gas leaks o parts; dewdrops gathered in a brick yard at sunrise, 25 arts; odor of honeysuckle 15 parts. Mix.

The mixture will give you an approximate conception of a Nashville drizzle. It is not so fragrant as a moth-ball nor as hick as pea-soup; but 'tis enough—'twill serve.

I went to a hotel in a tumbril. It required strong self-uppression for me to keep from climbing to the top of it nd giving an imitation of Sidney Carton. The vehicle was rawn by beasts of a bygone era and driven by something ark and emancipated.

I was sleepy and tired, so when I got to the hotel I hur-edly paid it the fifty cents it demanded (with approximate gniappe, I assure you). I knew its habits; and I did not want

to hear it prate about its old "marster" or anything that happened "befo' de wah."

The hotel was one of the kind described as "renovated." That means $20,000 worth of new marble pillars, tiling, electric lights and brass cuspidors in the lobby, and a new L. & N. time table and a lithograph of Lookout Mountain in each one of the great rooms above. The management was without reproach, the attention full of exquisite Southern courtesy, the service as slow as the progress of a snail and as good-humored as Rip Van Winkle. The food was worth traveling a thousand miles for. There is no other hotel in the world where you can get such chicken livers *en brochette*.

At dinner I asked a Negro waiter if there was anything doing in town. He pondered gravely for a minute, and then replied: "Well, boss, I don't really reckon there's anything at all doin' after sundown."

Sundown had been accomplished; it had been drowned in the drizzle long before. So that spectacle was denied me. But I went forth upon the streets in the drizzle to see what might be there.

It is built on undulating grounds; and the streets are lighted by electricity at a cost of $32,470 per annum.

As I left the hotel there was a race riot. Down upon me charged a company of freedmen, or Arabs, or Zulus, armed with—no, I saw with relief that they were not rifles, but whips. And I saw dimly a caravan of black, clumsy vehicles; and at the reassuring shouts, "Kyar you anywhere in the town, boss, fuh fifty cents," I reasoned that I was merely a "fare" instead of a victim.

I walked through long streets, all leading uphill. I wondered how those streets ever came down again. Perhaps they didn't until they were "graded." On a few of the "main streets" I

w lights in stores here and there; saw street cars go by con-
ying worthy burghers hither and yon; saw people pass
gaged in the art of conversation, and heard a burst of semi-
ely laughter issuing from a soda-water and ice-cream parlor.
he streets other than "main" seemed to have enticed upon
eir borders houses consecrated to peace and domesticity. In
any of them lights shone behind discreetly drawn window
ades, in a few pianos tinkled orderly and irreproachable mu-
. There was, indeed, little "doing." I wished I had come
fore sundown. So I returned to my hotel.

In November, 1864, the Confederate General Hood ad-
nced against Nashville, where he shut up a National force
der General Thomas. The latter then sallied forth and de-
ated the Confederates in a terrible conflict.

All my life I have heard of, admired, and witnessed the fine
arksmanship of the South in its peaceful conflicts in the
bacco-chewing regions. But in my hotel a surprise awaited
e. There were twelve bright, new, imposing, capacious brass
spidors in the great lobby, tall enough to be called urns and
wide-mouthed that the crack pitcher of a lady baseball
am should have been able to throw a ball into one of them
five paces distant. But, although a terrible battle had raged
d was still raging, the enemy had not suffered. Bright, new,
posing, capacious, untouched, they stood. But, shades of
fferson Brick! the tile floor—the beautiful tile floor! I could
t avoid thinking of the battle of Nashville, and trying to
aw, as is my foolish habit, some deductions about hereditary
arksmanship.

Here I first saw Major (by misplaced courtesy) Wentworth
swell. I knew him for a type the moment my eyes suffered
om the sight of him. A rat has no geographical habitat. My
l friend, A. Tennyson, said, as he so well said almost every-
ing:

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,
And curse me the British vermin, the rat.

Let us regard the word "British" as interchangeable *ad lib.* A rat is a rat.

This man was hunting about the hotel lobby like a starved dog that had forgotten where he had buried a bone. He had a face of great acreage, red, pulpy, and with a kind of sleepy massiveness like that of Buddha. He possessed one single virtue—he was very smoothly shaven. The mark of the beast is not indelible upon a man until he goes about with a stubble. I think that if he had not used his razor that day I would have repulsed his advances, and the criminal calendar of the world would have been spared the addition of one murder.

I happened to be standing within five feet of a cuspidor when Major Caswell opened fire upon it. I had been observant enough to perceive that the attacking force was using Gatlings instead of squirrel rifles, so I sidestepped so promptly that the major seized the opportunity to apologize to a noncombatant. He had the blabbing lip. In four minutes he had become my friend and had dragged me to the bar.

I desire to interpolate here that I am a Southerner. But I am not one by profession or trade. I eschew the string tie, the slouch hat, the Prince Albert, the number of bales of cotton destroyed by Sherman, and plug chewing. When the orchestra plays "Dixie" I do not cheer. I slide a little lower on the leather-cornered seat and, well, order another Würzburger and wish that Longstreet had—but what's the use?

Major Caswell banged the bar with his fist, and the first gun at Fort Sumter re-echoed. When he fired the last one at Appomattox I began to hope. But then he began on family trees and demonstrated that Adam was only a third cousin of a collateral branch of the Caswell family. Genealogy disposed

. he took up, to my distaste, his private family matters. He oke of his wife, traced her descent back to Eve, and pro- ely denied any possible rumor that she may have had re- ions in the land of Nod.

By this time I began to suspect that he was trying to obscure noise the fact that he had ordered the drinks, on the chance at I would be bewildered into paying for them. But when ey were down he crashed a silver dollar loudly upon the bar. hen, of course, another serving was obligatory. And when I d paid for that I took leave of him brusquely; for I wanted more of him. But before I had obtained my release he had ated loudly of an income that his wife received, and showed handful of silver money.

When I got my key at the desk the clerk said to me cour- ously: "If that man Caswell has annoyed you, and if you ould like to make a complaint, we will have him ejected. He a nuisance, a loafer, and without any known means of sup- rt, although he seems to have some money most the time. t we don't seem to be able to hit upon any means of throw- g him out legally."

"Why, no," said I, after some reflection; "I don't see my y clear to making a complaint. But I would like to place rself on record as asserting that I do not care for his com- ny. Your town," I continued, "seems to be a quiet one. hat manner of entertainment, adventure, or excitement, ve you to offer to the stranger within your gates?"

'Well, sir," said the clerk, "there will be a show here next ursday. It is—I'll look it up and have the announcement t up to your room with the ice water. Good-night."

After I went up to my room I looked out the window. It s only about ten o'clock, but I looked upon a silent town. e drizzle continued, spangled with dim lights, as far apart currants in a cake sold at the Ladies' Exchange.

'A quiet place," I said to myself, as my first shoe struck the

ceiling of the occupant of the room beneath mine. "Nothing of the life here that gives color and good variety to the cities in the East and West. Just a good, ordinary, hum-drum, business town."

Nashville occupies a foremost place among the manufacturing centres of the country. It is the fifth boot and shoe market in the United States, the largest candy and cracker manufacturing city in the South, and does an enormous wholesale dry-goods, grocery, and drug business.

I must tell you how I came to be in Nashville, and I assure you the digression brings as much tedium to me as it does to you. I was traveling elsewhere on my own business, but I had a commission from a Northern literary magazine to stop over there and establish a personal connection between the publication and one of its contributors, Azalea Adair.

Adair (there was no clue to the personality except the handwriting) had sent in some essays (lost art!) and poems that had made the editors swear approvingly over their one o'clock luncheon. So they had commissioned me to round up said Adair and corner by contract his or her output at two cents a word before some other publisher offered her ten or twenty.

At nine o'clock the next morning, after my chicken liver *en brochette* (try them if you can find that hotel), I strayed out into the drizzle, which was still on for an unlimited run. At the first corner I came upon Uncle Cæsar. He was a stalwart Negro, older than the pyramids, with gray wool and a face that reminded me of Brutus, and a second afterwards of the late King Cettiwayo. He wore the most remarkable coat that I ever had seen or expect to see. It reached to his ankles and had once been a Confederate gray in color. But rain and sun and age had so variegated it that Joseph's coat, beside it would have faded to a pale monochrome. I must linger with

it coat, for it has to do with the story—the story that is so ng in coming, because you can hardly expect anything to ppen in Nashville.

Once it must have been the military coat of an officer. The pe of it had vanished, but all adown its front it had been gged and tasseled magnificently. But now the frogs and tas- s were gone. In their stead had been patiently stitched (I rmised by some surviving "black mammy") new frogs made cunningly twisted common hempen twine. This twine was yed and disheveled. It must have been added to the coat as ubstitute for vanished splendors, with tasteless but pains- king devotion, for it followed faithfully the curves of the ng-missing frogs. And, to complete the comedy and pathos the garment, all its buttons were gone save one. The second tton from the top alone remained. The coat was fastened other twine strings tied through the buttonholes and other les rudely pierced in the opposite side. There was never ch a weird garment so fantastically bedecked and of so ny mottled hues. The lone button was the size of a half- llar, made of yellow horn and sewed on with coarse twine. This Negro stood by a carriage so old that Ham himself ght have started a hack line with it after he left the ark with e two animals hitched to it. As I approached he threw open e door, drew out a feather duster, waved it without using and said in deep, rumbling tones:

'Step right in, suh; ain't a speck of dust in it—jus' got back m a funeral, suh."

I inferred that on such gala occasions carriages were given extra cleaning. I looked up and down the street and per- ved that there was little choice among the vehicles for hire at lined the curb. I looked in my memorandum book for e address of Azalea Adair.

"I want to go to 861 Jessamine Street," I said, and was out to step into the hack. But for an instant the thick, long,

gorilla-like arm of the Negro barred me. On his massive and saturnine face a look of sudden suspicion and enmity flashed for a moment. Then, with quickly returning conviction, he asked, blandishingly: "What are you gwine there for, boss?"

"What is that to you?" I asked, a little sharply.

"Nothin', suh, jus' nothin'. Only it's a lonesome kind of part of town and few folks ever has business out there. Step right in. The seats is clean—jes' got back from a funeral, suh."

A mile and a half it must have been to our journey's end. I could hear nothing but the fearful rattle of the ancient hack over the uneven brick paving; I could smell nothing but the drizzle, now further flavored with coal smoke and something like a mixture of tar and oleander blossoms. All I could see through the streaming windows were two rows of dim houses.

The city has an area of 10 square miles; 181 miles of streets of which 137 miles are paved; a system of waterworks that cost $2,000,000, with 77 miles of mains.

Eight-sixty-one Jessamine Street was a decayed mansion. Thirty yards back from the street it stood, outmerged in a splendid grove of trees and untrimmed shrubbery. A row of box bushes overflowed and almost hid the paling fence from sight; the gate was kept closed by a rope noose that encircled the gate post and the first paling of the gate. But when you got inside you saw that 861 was a shell, a shadow, a ghost of former grandeur and excellence. But in the story, I have not yet got inside.

When the hack had ceased from rattling and the weary quadrupeds came to a rest I handed my jehu his fifty cents with an additional quarter, feeling a glow of conscious generosity as I did so. He refused it.

"It's two dollars, suh," he said.

"How's that?" I asked. "I plainly heard you call out at the tel, 'Fifty cents to any part of the town.'"

"It's two dollars, suh," he repeated obstinately. "It's a long ys from the hotel."

"It is within the city limits and well within them," I argued. Don't think that you have picked up a greenhorn Yankee. you see those hills over there?" I went on, pointing toward e east (I could not see them, myself, for the drizzle); "well, vas born and raised on their other side. You old fool nigger, n't you tell people from other people when you see 'em?"

The grim face of King Cettiwayo softened. "Is you from e South, suh? I reckon it was them shoes of yourn fooled e. They is somethin' sharp in the toes for a Southern n'l'man to wear."

"Then the charge is fifty cents, I suppose?" said I, inexibly.

His former expression, a mingling of cupidity and hostility, urned, remained ten seconds, and vanished.

"Boss," he said, "fifty cents is right; but I *needs* two dollars, n; I'm *obleeged* to have two dollars. I ain't *demandin'* it w, suh; after I knows whar you's from; I'm jus' sayin' that *as* to have two dollars to-night and business is mighty po'."

Peace and confidence settled upon his heavy features. He d been luckier than he had hoped. Instead of having picked a greenhorn, ignorant of rates, he had come upon an inritance.

"You confounded old rascal," I said, reaching down to my cket, "you ought to be turned over to the police."

For the first time I saw him smile. He knew; *he knew*; HE NEW.

I gave him two one-dollar bills. As I handed them over I ticed that one of them had seen parlous times. Its upper ht-hand corner was missing, and it had been torn through

in the middle, but joined again. A strip of blue tissue paper pasted over the split, preserved its negotiability.

Enough of the African bandit for the present: I left him happy, lifted the rope, and opened the creaky gate.

The house, as I said, was a shell. A paint brush had not touched it in twenty years. I could not see why a strong wind should not have bowled it over like a house of cards until I looked again at the trees that hugged it close—the trees that saw the battle of Nashville and still drew their protecting branches around it against storm and enemy and cold.

Azalea Adair, fifty years old, white-haired, a descendant of the cavaliers, as thin and frail as the house she lived in, robed in the cheapest and cleanest dress I ever saw, with an air as simple as a queen's, received me.

The reception room seemed a mile square, because there was nothing in it except some rows of books, on unpainted white-pine bookshelves, a cracked marble-topped table, a rag rug, a hairless horsehair sofa, and two or three chairs. Yes, there was a picture on the wall, a colored crayon drawing of a cluster of pansies. I looked around for the portrait of Andrew Jackson and the pine-cone hanging basket but they were not there.

Azalea Adair and I had conversation, a little of which will be repeated to you. She was a product of the old South, gently nurtured in the sheltered life. Her learning was not broad, but was deep and of splendid originality in its somewhat narrow scope. She had been educated at home, and her knowledge of the world was derived from inference and by inspiration. Of such is the precious, small group of essayists made. While she talked to me I kept brushing my fingers, trying, unconsciously to rid them guiltily of the absent dust from the half-calf backs of Lamb, Chaucer, Hazlitt, Marcus Aurelius, Montaigne, and Hood. She was exquisite, she was a valuable discovery. Near

erybody nowadays knows too much—oh, so much too much of real life.

I could perceive clearly that Azalea Adair was very poor. A use and a dress she had, not much else, I fancied. So, di- led between my duty to the magazine and my loyalty to the ets and essayists who fought Thomas in the valley of the mberland, I listened to her voice which was like a harpsi- ord's, and found that I could not speak of contracts. In the esence of the nine Muses and the three Graces one hesi- ed to lower the topic to two cents. There would have to another colloquy after I had regained my commercialism. t I spoke of my mission, and three o'clock of the next aft- noon was set for the discussion of the business proposition. "Your town," I said, as I began to make ready to depart hich is the time for smooth generalities), "seems to be a iet, sedate place. A home town, I should say, where few ngs out of the ordinary ever happen."

It carries on an extensive trade in stoves and hollow ware th the West and South, and its flouring mills have a daily pacity of more than 2,000 barrels.

Azalea Adair seemed to reflect.

'I have never thought of it that way," she said, with a kind sincere intensity that seemed to belong to her. "Isn't it in e still, quiet places that things do happen? I fancy that en God began to create the earth on the first Monday rning one could have leaned out one's window and heard e drops of mud splashing from His trowel as He built up e everlasting hills. What did the noisiest project in the world mean the building of the tower of Babel—result in finally? page and a half of Esperanto in the *North American view*."

'Of course," said I, platitudinously, "human nature is e same everywhere; but there is more color—er—more

drama and movement and—er—romance in some cities than in others."

"On the surface," said Azalea Adair. "I have traveled many times around the world in a golden airship wafted on two wings—print and dreams. I have seen (on one of my imaginary tours) the Sultan of Turkey bowstring with his own hands one of his wives who had uncovered her face in public. I have seen a man in Nashville tear up his theatre tickets because his wife was going out with her face covered—with rice powder. In San Francisco's Chinatown I saw the slave girl Sing Yee dipped slowly, inch by inch, in boiling almond oil to make her swear she would never see her American lover again. She gave in when the boiling oil had reached three inches above her knee. At a euchre party in East Nashville the other night I saw Kitty Morgan cut dead by seven of her schoolmates and lifelong friends because she had married a house painter. The boiling oil was sizzling as high as her heart but I wish you could have seen the fine little smile that she carried from table to table. Oh, yes, it is a hum-drum town. Just a few miles of red brick houses and mud and stores and lumber yards."

Some one had knocked hollowly at the back of the house. Azalea Adair breathed a soft apology and went to investigate the sound. She came back in three minutes with brightened eyes, a faint flush on her cheeks, and ten years lifted from her shoulders.

"You must have a cup of tea before you go," she said, "and a sugar cake."

She reached and shook a little iron bell. In shuffled a small Negro girl about twelve, barefoot, not very tidy, glowering at me with thumb in mouth and bulging eyes.

Azalea Adair opened a tiny, worn purse and drew out a dollar bill, a dollar bill with the upper right-hand corner missing, torn in two pieces and pasted together again with a strip of

ue tissue paper. It was one of those bills I had given the ratical Negro—there was no doubt of it.

"Go up to Mr. Baker's store on the corner, Impy," she said, nding the girl the dollar bill, "and get a quarter of a pound tea—the kind he always sends me—and ten cents' worth sugar cakes. Now, hurry. The supply of tea in the house ppens to be exhausted," she explained to me.

Impy left by the back way. Before the scrape of her hard, re feet had died away on the back porch, a wild shriek—I as sure it was hers—filled the hollow house. Then the deep, uff tones of an angry man's voice mingled with the girl's rther squeals and unintelligible words.

Azalea Adair rose without surprise or emotion and disap- ared. For two minutes I heard the hoarse rumble of the an's voice; then something like an oath and a slight scuffle, d she returned calmly to her chair.

"This is a roomy house," she said, "and I have a tenant for rt of it. I am sorry to have to rescind my invitation to tea. is impossible to get the kind I always use at the store. Per- ps to-morrow Mr. Baker will be able to supply me."

I was sure that Impy had not had time to leave the house. nquired concerning street-car lines and took my leave. After was well on my way I remembered that I had not learned zalea Adair's name. But to-morrow would do.

That same day I started in on the course of iniquity that is uneventful city forced upon me. I was in the town only o days, but in that time I managed to lie shamelessly by egraph, and to be an accomplice—after the fact, if that is e correct legal term—to a murder.

As I rounded the corner nearest my hotel the Afrite coach- an of the polychromatic, nonpareil coat seized me, swung en the dungeony door of his peripatetic sarcophagus, flirted feather duster and began his ritual: "Step right in, boss.

Carriage is clean—jus' got back from a funeral. Fifty cents to any——"

And then he knew me and grinned broadly. "'Scuse me boss; you is de gen'l'man what rid out with me dis mawnin' Thank you kindly, suh."

"I am going out to 861 again to-morrow afternoon at three," said I, "and if you will be here, I'll let you drive me. So you know Miss Adair?" I concluded, thinking of my dollar bill.

"I belonged to her father, Judge Adair, suh," he replied.

"I judge that she is pretty poor," I said. "She hasn't much money to speak of, has she?"

For an instant I looked again at the fierce countenance of King Cettiwayo, and then he changed back to an extortionate old Negro hack driver.

"She ain't gwine to starve, suh," he said, slowly. "She has reso'ces, suh; she has reso'ces."

"I shall pay you fifty cents for the trip," said I.

"Dat is puffeckly correct, suh," he answered, humbly. "I jus *had* to have dat two dollars dis mawnin', boss."

I went to the hotel and lied by electricity. I wired the magazine: "A. Adair holds out for eight cents a word."

The answer that came back was: "Give it to her quick, you duffer."

Just before dinner "Major" Wentworth Caswell bore down upon me with the greetings of a long-lost friend. I have seen few men whom I have so instantaneously hated, and of whom it was so difficult to be rid. I was standing at the bar when he invaded me; therefore I could not wave the white ribbon in his face. I would have paid gladly for the drinks, hoping thereby, to escape another; but he was one of those despicable, roaring, advertising bibbers who must have brass bands and fireworks attend upon every cent that they waste in their follies.

With an air of producing millions he drew two one-dolla

lls from a pocket and dashed one of them upon the bar. I oked once more at the dollar bill with the upper righthand rner missing, torn through the middle, and patched with a rip of blue tissue paper. It was my dollar again. It could ave been no other.

I went up to my room. The drizzle and the monotony of dreary, eventless Southern town had made me tired and tless. I remember that just before I went to bed I mentally sposed of the mysterious dollar bill (which might have rmed the clue to a tremendously fine detective story of San rancisco) by saying to myself sleepily: "Seems as if a lot of eople here own stock in the Hack-Drivers' Trust. Pays divi-ends promptly, too. Wonder if——" Then I fell asleep.

King Cettiwayo was at his post the next day, and rattled y bones over the stones out to 861. He was to wait and ttle me back again when I was ready.

Azalea Adair looked paler and cleaner and frailer than she ad looked on the day before. After she had signed the con-act at eight cents per word she grew still paler and began to ip out of her chair. Without much trouble I managed to get er up on the antediluvian horsehair sofa and then I ran out the sidewalk and yelled to the coffee-colored Pirate to ring a doctor. With a wisdom that I had not suspected in m, he abandoned his team and struck off up the street oot, realizing the value of speed. In ten minutes he re-rned with a grave, gray-haired, and capable man of medi-ne. In a few words (worth much less than eight cents each) explained to him my presence in the hollow house of ystery. He bowed with stately understanding, and turned to e old Negro.

"Uncle Cæsar," he said, calmly, "run up to my house and k Miss Lucy to give you a cream pitcher full of fresh milk ad half a tumbler of port wine. And hurry back. Don't drive run. I want you to get back sometime this week."

It occurred to me that Dr. Merriman also felt a distrust as to the speeding powers of the land-pirate's steeds. After Uncle Cæsar was gone, lumberingly, but swiftly, up the street, the doctor looked me over with great politeness and as much careful calculation until he had decided that I might do.

"It is only a case of insufficient nutrition," he said. "In other words, the result of poverty, pride, and starvation. Mrs. Caswell has many devoted friends who would be glad to aid her, but she will accept nothing except from that old Negro, Uncle Cæsar, who was once owned by her family."

"Mrs. Caswell!" said I, in surprise. And then I looked at the contract and saw that she had signed it "Azalea Adair Caswell."

"I thought she was Miss Adair," I said.

"Married to a drunken, worthless loafer, sir," said the doctor. "It is said that he robs her even of the small sums that her old servant contributes toward her support."

When the milk and wine had been brought the doctor soon revived Azalea Adair. She sat up and talked of the beauty of the autumn leaves that were then in season and their height of color. She referred lightly to her fainting seizure as the outcome of an old palpitation of the heart. Impy fanned her as she lay on the sofa. The doctor was due elsewhere, and I followed him to the door. I told him that it was within my power and intentions to make a reasonable advance of money to Azalea Adair on future contributions to the magazine, and he seemed pleased.

"By the way," he said, "perhaps you would like to know that you have had royalty for a coachman. Old Cæsar's grandfather was a king in Congo. Cæsar himself has royal ways, as you may have observed."

As the doctor was moving off I heard Uncle Cæsar's voice inside: "Did he git bofe of dem two dollars from you, Miss Zalea?"

"Yes, Cæsar," I heard Azalea Adair answer, weakly. And hen I went in and concluded business negotiations with our ontributor. I assumed the responsibility of advancing fifty ollars, putting it as a necessary formality in binding our bargain. And then Uncle Cæsar drove me back to the hotel.

Here ends all of the story as far as I can testify as a witness. The rest must be only bare statements of facts.

At about six o'clock I went out for a stroll. Uncle Cæsar vas at his corner. He threw open the door of his carriage, lourished his duster, and began his depressing formula: Step right in, suh. Fifty cents to anywhere in the city—ack's puffickly clean, suh—jus' got back from a funeral——"

And then he recognized me. I think his eyesight was getting bad. His coat had taken on a few more faded shades of olor, the twine strings were more frayed and ragged, the last emaining button—the button of yellow horn—was gone. A notley descendant of kings was Uncle Cæsar!

About two hours later I saw an excited crowd besieging the ront of the drug store. In a desert where nothing happens his was manna; so I wedged my way inside. On an extemorized couch of empty boxes and chairs was stretched the nortal corporeality of Major Wentworth Caswell. A doctor vas testing him for the mortal ingredient. His decision was hat it was conspicuous by its absence.

The erstwhile Major had been found dead on a dark street nd brought by curious and ennuied citizens to the drug tore. The late human being had been engaged in terrific batle—the details showed that. Loafer and reprobate though he ad been, he had been also a warrior. But he had lost. His ands were yet clinched so tightly that his fingers would not e opened. The gentle citizens who had known him stood bout and searched their vocabularies to find some good ords, if it were possible, to speak of him. One kind-looking

man said, after much thought: "When 'Cas' was abo
fo'teen he was one of the best spellers in the school."

While I stood there the fingers of the right hand of "t
man that was," which hung down the side of a white pi
box, relaxed, and dropped something at my feet. I cover
it with one foot quietly, and a little later on I picked it
and pocketed it. I reasoned that in his last struggle his ha
must have seized that object unwittingly and held it in
death grip.

At the hotel that night the main topic of conversation, wi
the possible exceptions of politics and prohibition, was t
demise of Major Caswell. I heard one man say to a gro
of listeners:

"In my opinion, gentlemen, Caswell was murdered
some of these no-account niggars for his money. He had fi
dollars this afternoon which he showed to several gentlem
in the hotel. When he was found the money was not on
person."

I left the city the next morning at nine, and as the tra
was crossing the bridge over the Cumberland River I to
out of my pocket a yellow horn overcoat button the size
a fifty-cent piece, with frayed ends of coarse twine hangi
from it, and cast it out of the window into the slow, mud
waters below.

I wonder what's doing in Buffalo!

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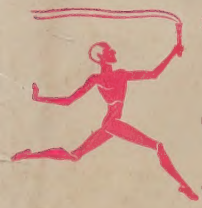

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